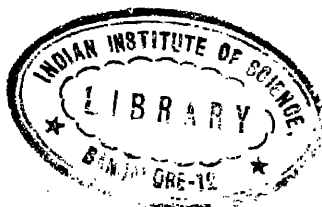


THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

XXXIV

(June - September 1927)



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PREFACE

This volume covers the three months from June 16 to September 15, 1927. Gandhiji had come down to Bangalore after his long stay in Nandi Hills and towards the end of June he began touring Mysore in easy stages. Well pleased with the progress as well as the friendly atmosphere of the State he said in his farewell speech at Bangalore, "More is expected of those who give much. I have found so much good in this State that I almost fancy that if you and the Maharaja together will it, you can make this State *Ramarajya*" (p. 417).

At the end of August he began a tour of Tamilnad, arrived at Madras on September 3 and proceeded south till he reached Mannargudi, East Tanjore, on September 15. In his numerous speeches he spoke as usual of khadi and charkha, of untouchability, of child widows and *Devadasis* and on the duty of municipalities to enforce sanitation. Often while addressing students, he talked about the imperative necessity of Hindus studying the *Gita*.

At the back of every word he uttered and every act he did, there was "a religious consciousness and a downright religious motive" (p. 450). But he recognized nothing as possessing spiritual or moral value "apart from work and action" (p. 451). And he recognized no religion which cannot be reduced to economic terms and no economics which cannot be "reduced to terms of religion or spirituality" (p. 452). In his brilliant tribute to the deep spirituality of C. R. Das, he says: "A time comes in the life of every Indian when mere political battle jars on him and . . . he seeks to base everything on spiritual, livingly moral foundations" (p. 500). Speaking at the Y.M.C.A., Cuddalore, on his own constant striving after perfection, he says: ". . . there is no distinction whatsoever between individual growth and corporate growth . . . The first condition therefore of individual growth is utmost humility." His advice then to students and young people wanting to serve the country and to do big things is: "First of all look after yourselves and make yourselves fairly good instruments of service." This process one has to start with a clean slate, i.e., a pure heart and this purity of the heart can only be achieved through what the Christians call a "new birth". The corresponding term in Hinduism is "to be twice born". This new birth

Gandhiji describes as an "inward change which is unmistakable. . . . It is a transformation of the heart" (pp. 505-6). There is no conflict between *sadhana* and service. According to him, "the progress of the soul can best be achieved through the service of society. Service is the same as *yajna*" (p. 97). Whether it is karma, *bhakti* or *jnana*, Gandhiji is convinced "that the advancement of one promotes the advancement of all, and the fall of one implies the fall of all" (p. 334). Indeed Gandhiji derived spiritual sustenance from contact with fellow-workers. In a farewell speech at Bangalore he explains: "Man is both an individual and a social being. As an individual he may have his prayer during all the waking hours, but as a member of society he has to join in the congregational prayer. I for one may tell you that when I am alone I do have my prayer, but I do feel very lonely without a congregation to share the prayer with me" (p. 418).

All this was for the *sevaks*, not the masses. Poverty being the deep-seated disease and the sole obsession of the masses, he declared: "They will call you and me fiends if we talk about God to them. They know, if they know any God at all, a God of terror, vengeance, a pitiless tyrant" (pp. 453-4).

Hindu-Muslim dissensions weighed heavily on his mind though he spoke little about them. The silence was deliberate and a confession of humiliation which had gone "too deep for words" (p. 3). Though he had more confidence in the political acumen of Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhiji sponsored the election of Dr. M. A. Ansari as Congress President, because of his hope that he would help to achieve the miracle of Hindu-Muslim unity. In a frank and humorous letter, he counselled Dr. Ansari to tear to pieces his statement suggesting co-operation rather than non-co-operation by Congressmen in the Councils (pp. 304-5). When, however, the statement was published, Gandhiji wrote: "Consistently with your views about the necessity of communal unity, you may not now retire. But . . . I think it would be necessary for you to make a very brief statement making it clear that whilst you adhere to the opinion expressed in your statement, you will not seek to impose that view upon the Congress but that you will confine your own activity solely to the promotion of communal unity" (p. 403).

While in Madras, Gandhiji supported the free-lance agitation for the removal of the Neill statue. But he insisted that the art of satyagraha was to be learned from *Young India* and to be practised on the condition that success, if achieved, should go to the

credit of the Congress but failure, if inevitable, should not be allowed to bring discredit to the Congress (p. 469). He claimed to be the keeper of the lighthouse called satyagraha in the otherwise uncharted sea of Indian politics (p. 173).

Those who were nearest to him were the most liable to be harshly criticized. Answering the charge that he was tender to the Christians and Muslims but not to the Hindus, he said that he had no fear of being misunderstood by his own people (p. 537). Not that he spared the Christian Missionaries who undermined instead of strengthening the faith of the people distorting the meaning of "the richest word, God" (p. 260). He advised Hindu reformers to carry on their mission "without cutting themselves off from Hindu society, bearing no malice and with perfect love of the Hindu religion" (p. 33). However, he was far from being a revivalist. While he objected to superficial Europeanization; he refused to believe that the only alternative was "a complete reversion to the ancient Aryan tradition" (p. 315). Not only Hindu society and Hindu religion itself had to change with changing circumstances, but the changes in Western society too when they are for the better should be recognized and made use of. "Wisdom is no monopoly of one continent or one race. . . . I gladly admit that a new power for good is slowly but surely arising in the West" (p. 316). Perhaps the most sustained example of this capacity for self-criticism is the conclusion of the "Drain Inspector's Report", a balanced review of Miss Mayo's malicious attack on the Indian people and on Indian culture. Though convinced that "her case is to perpetuate white domination in India on the plea of India's unfitness to rule herself" (p. 544) and while considering "the book to be unfit to be placed before Americans and Englishmen (for it can do no good to them)", Gandhiji certified that *Mother India* "is a book that every Indian can read with some degree of profit. . . . It is a good thing to see ourselves as others see us" (p. 546).

In an article on "Prohibition" he says, people drink if they are forlorn and uncared for. Those who take to drink "are no more vicious by nature than teetotallers are saints by nature" (p. 489).

As examples of his mastery of English, one may cite his appeal to caste Hindus to "come down from their insolent heights and brother the untouchable" (p. 452) and his reference to the poor sisters of Orissa who are in rags: "But they have not lost all sense of decency, but I assure you we have. We are naked in spite of our clothing, and they are clothed in spite of their nakedness" (p. 454).

Several letters deal with satyagraha within the family circle. To his grandson Kanti, who wished to see his father Harilal, his advice is: "Try to understand what your duty at the present moment is, and act with courage and determination in accordance with that duty. Consider, not what you would like to do, but what you should do. You may show this letter to anyone you may wish to consult" (p. 19).

Approving Raihana Tyabji's decision to give up a dress on which her mother had "lavished so much time and so much love", Gandhiji suggests that all those things would go to her younger sister when "mother is satisfied that you will never be likely to want them" (p. 28). At the same time, the daughter should recognize that when it comes to reducing an abstract right to concrete practice, even considerate and liberal-minded parents do interfere with the independence of their grown-up children. In such a situation the child should realize that some restraint on liberty is demoralizing and some is uplifting. "No restraint is demoralizing which one submits to, not out of fear, selfishness or the like, but out of consideration for, or affection for others" (p. 151). Writing to Kamala Das Gupta, he warns her that the Ashram, which she wishes to join, "is a place for toilers, those who believe in the necessity and the moral value of labouring with their hands and feet" (p. 263). Later he encourages her, saying, "If you are sincere about your desire to go to the Ashram and earnest and yet gentle in your effort, you will certainly bear down the opposition of your parents. Until you can secure the permission of your parents, you can mentally live the Ashram life" (p. 388). An interesting instance of such personal advice is that offered to Mirabeau on the question of segregation during monthly sickness. Using an argument derived from Morley's *On Compromise*, which Mahadev Desai had translated into Gujarati, and referring to St. Paul's advice to his congregation to abstain from meat "if meat offend thy brother", Gandhiji explains: "There are certain things not in themselves immoral which we do for the sake of others and there are certain other things which being in themselves immoral we will not and must not do for the sake of the whole world. If self-imposed segregation appears to you as immoral, you must not do it even to please me. If however there is nothing immoral in it, then you will do it for the sake of your neighbours whom you will rightly consider to be ignorant to that extent" (p. 400).

The series of letters to and about N. R. Malkani illustrate Gandhiji's concern for integrity in those whom he loved. Public

events however grave did not shock him as much as a suspected breach of personal integrity. He declares: "Bardoli never disturbed my sleep; but Malkani does" (p. 195).

The letter to Santoji Maharaj is of high philosophical and autobiographical interest revealing as it does Gandhiji's personal and practical approach to the *Gita*. "I have somehow found something for myself by combining all the suggestions" derived from Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhva and others (p. 93). One should evolve one's code of conduct and regulate oneself in strict accordance with the code thus set up by oneself for oneself. Comparisons with "the average man" are totally wrong and "should never be held to justify sinning" (p. 198). That swaraj implies complete self-rule as well as freedom from other-rule is indicated by the recognition that "suicide becomes a duty" on certain occasions (p. 440). "Being moral requires that wherever there is a doubt, we should decide against our own interest" (p. 41).

While sentimentalists waste time and energy looking before and after, Gandhiji, the man of religion, recognizes the wisdom of "one step enough for me". The past and future are to be merged in the present and "the present means our duty at this moment. If we put all our strength into doing our duty, as we know it at this moment, we shall have made the highest human effort. Sorrow springs from dreaming of the future and from lamenting the past. Hence one who concerns himself with the present and does his duty has neither birth nor death" (p. 64). If this is karmayoga in a nutshell, it leads naturally to the attainment of *jnana*, for through the performance of *swadharma* one progressively realizes "the doctrine of oneness of life... Realization of the doctrine seems to be impossible unless we could reduce the 'I' in us to a complete cipher" p. (206). The non-violent worker is humbler than the mango tree that bends as it grows up and so becomes a cipher (p. 357). The humility is matched by courage and strength. "Anyone who has the strength to forget the 'I' in him and make himself a cipher can have a glimpse of this universal Soul..." (p. 93).

Instead of relying on light from the past, however glorious, the man of religion is content to bask and labour each day in that day's sunlight. To the missionaries who wanted to know how they might spread the glad tidings of the coming of Jesus and his death in redemption of the sins of humanity, Gandhiji replied, "... God did not bear the Cross only 1900 years ago, but He bears it today, and He dies and is resurrected from day to day. It would be poor comfort to the world if it had to

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depend upon a historical God who died 2,000 years ago. Do not then preach the God of history, but show Him as He lives today through you. . . . It is better to allow our lives to speak for us than our words" (pp. 261-2).

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews, as also passages which are not by Gandhiji, have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a date-line or where the date of writing has special significance and is ascertainable.

References to Volume I of this series are to the August 1958 edition. References to *An Autobiography* cite only the Part and Chapter, in view of the varying pagination in different editions.

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to those available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the volume are also provided at the end.

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1. LETTER TO GANGU

[After June 15, 1927]¹

CHI. GANGU,

Your letter. You write good Hindi. You will soon be avoiding the mistakes you now make.

You should bear no resentment even in your heart against Lakshmibehn for what she said. Doing the *Vatapooja*² was as much right for her as not doing it was for you. You have no faith in these things; therefore it would have been useless for you to join; it might have looked like weakness or even hypocrisy. We should have the same tolerance for other people's conduct and beliefs as we may expect from them towards our own.

You need not be unhappy if Chi. Maganlal did not give you the charkha. If you ask him he will surely tell you the reason. Even if we are not satisfied with the explanation, still we must not feel aggrieved. We must not hastily conclude that a person's attitude or act is all wrong just because he himself or the elders cannot give us a satisfactory explanation of it. Only by living in society can we learn to tolerate difference of opinion and the pairs of opposites such as happiness and unhappiness. And as you want to dedicate yourself to service and observe *brahmacharya*, you must fully acquire the qualities of forbearance and tolerance. Mirabehn thinks you need to improve your spinning, ginning, etc. In spinning the thread . . .³

Manibehn has been a *brahmacharini* till now, and proposes to remain one and she is making positive efforts towards it. The other has entered married life but is aware of the nobility of *brahmacharya* and endeavours to observe it herself. You must not suppress your feelings just because I write all this. Do write to me whatever you think. I shall try to point out the pitfalls ahead on your way. Take from this whatever you find acceptable and go ahead.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 12324

¹ This letter appears to have been written after Gangu left Rewari Ashram for Sabarmati along with Mirabehn in 1927. The *Vatapooja* fell on June 15.

² Worship of the banyan tree by married women on the full moon day of *Jyaishtha*.

³ As in the source

2. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

When the President of the Congress¹ wired that a unanimous resolution on the Hindu-Muslim question was reached by the All-India Congress Committee², I could not enthuse over the information. The wire told me enough about the contents of the resolution. When the President paid me a visit at Nandi³, he asked me whether I would write on it. I told him I did not think I could write anything helpful. A few days after the visit I got a message from a friend. Its purport was: "You are responsible for the mischief that is going on in our midst. If you had not dragged the Hindus into the Khilafat agitation, the recent tragic events would not have happened. But you alone can now save us."

In translating the message I have softened the bitterness of the language of the original. It seems to me to call for a reiteration of my belief about Hindu-Muslim unity.

I do not repent of my part in the Khilafat agitation. It was a duty I discharged towards my Mussalman countrymen. The Hindus would have been wrong, if they had not helped their brethren in their distress. However ugly the present look of things may be, future generations of Mussalmans will recall with gratitude this great act of friendship on the part of Hindus. But the future apart, as I believe in the proverb that virtue is its own reward, I should always defend my action on the Khilafat question. I therefore received the friend's message of rebuke with perfect calmness.

But I wish I could fulfil his expectations and assist immediately and materially in bringing about peace. For I am just as strong a believer as ever in unity and the necessity for it. If it could be achieved by giving my life, I have the will to give it and I hope I have the strength for it. I should with the greatest joy undertake an indefinite fast, as I very nearly did at Delhi, in 1924,⁴ if it would melt and change the stony hearts of Hindus

¹ S. Srinivasa Iyengar

² On May 15 and 16, 1927, at Bombay

³ The reference is to Nandi Hills near Bangalore where Gandhiji was resting from April 19 to June 4 after he had fallen ill on March 26, 1927; *vide* Vol. XXXIII.

⁴ From September 17 to October 8; *vide* Vol. XXV.

and Mussalmans. But I have no sign from God within to undertake the penance. If a penance is itself an act of purification, it has also to be preceded by an equal measure of initial purification. I am obviously not pure enough for that supreme penance.

If the reader does not see me now often refer to the question in these pages, it is because the sense of humiliation has gone too deep for words. It matters little to me whether the perpetrators of shameful deeds are Hindus or Mussalmans. It is enough to know that some of us are blaspheming a patient God and doing inhuman deeds in the sacred name of religion. I know too that neither assassination nor fratricidal acts can possibly save religion. Religion worth the name can only be saved by purity, humility and fearlessness of the uttermost type among its professors. It is the only *shuddhi*¹ and only propaganda.

Hence has the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee left me unmoved. For I know that we have not yet changed our hearts. We have not shed fear of one another. Any compromise that is unaccompanied by these two conditions must be a mere make-shift.

Moreover, I feel that any agreement between the component parts of the nation must be voluntary and must remain so for all time. It must not, if it is conceived in terms of swaraj, depend for its final ratification or enforcement upon a legal enactment. Ratification by our respective organizations must be held to be final and binding. Enforcement must depend upon the honour of the leaders of respective parties and ultimately, in the absence of reliance on non-violence, on the arbitrament of civil war fought decently or indecently as the case may be. It is a sign of weakness, not of fitness for swaraj to go to the foreign ruling power to arbitrate between us or to enforce the peace between us at the point of the bayonet.

If we the so-called leaders have no control over our fighting elements, our agreement must be held to be unreal and useless. Before we think of real swaraj, we must gain control over the masses. We must learn to behave ourselves. The agreement had no effect on Delhi, and to our eternal shame the Government has been the keeper of the peace on Bakr Id.

My creed of non-violence is an extremely active force. It has no room for cowardice or even weakness. There is hope for a violent man to be some day non-violent, but there is none for a coward. I have therefore said more than once in these pages

¹ Reconversion to Hinduism; literally, 'purification'

that if we do not know how to defend ourselves, our women and our places of worship by the force of suffering, i.e., non-violence, we must, if we are men, be at least able to defend all these by fighting. It is unmanly to ask or expect the Government to ensure the peace between rival parties or to defend our women against ourselves. And while we remain so unmanly it is hopeless to expect swaraj. In well-ordered societies, governments merely undertake the police work. But the recent elaborate preparations at Delhi or Lahore were no part of police work. Differences we shall always have. But we must learn to settle them all, whether religious or other, by arbitration. Before the rulers we must be able to present a united front and demonstrate to the world our capacity for regulating our own manners if we would have swaraj.

If, however, we have no leaders whom we can elect as arbitrators who would give wise and impartial decisions, or, if we are too unruly and barbarous to wait for and abide by decisions of arbitrators of our choice, we must fight till we are exhausted and come to our senses. The Government will no doubt always intervene, whether we will or no, either to keep the public peace or to preserve its own safety. But it will weaken us the least, if the rival factions will courageously and straightforwardly refrain from courting the protection or assistance of Government. Why should a murderer in such warfare be defended? Let him seek the gallows. Let breakers of places of worship come forth boldly and say, we have done this for the sake of religion, punish us if you like! Let those who kill innocent passers-by deliver themselves to the police and say, we have done it all for God's sake! All this may read heartless. But I have merely endeavoured to suggest a way that is straighter and less weak than the one we have hitherto adopted.

And if we cannot, after the manner of civilized men, resort to voluntary arbitration or, after the manner of brave barbarous races, fight out differences without seeking the intervention of British justice or bayonets, all we may expect to get in the shape of reforms is an increased agent's share in the bureaucratic Government; in other words, an increasing share in the exploitation of the dumb millions. Let us take care that any agreement we may come to does not reduce us to that unenviable condition.

Young India, 16-6-1927

3. NOTES

SARDAR KHARAK SINGH

It must be a matter of joy to every patriot to find Sardar Kharak Singh once more free to take up national work outside the prison walls. By his indomitable will and refusal to bend himself to authority in order to gain his freedom he has risen in the estimation of his countrymen. May he have long years of service to the country in its fight for freedom.

HAVE I BOYCOTTED ANDHRA?

When Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya saw me at Nandi and again at Bangalore, he told me that as Andhra was not on the tour list for the year, many Andhra friends had enquired of him whether I had boycotted Andhra. My old love of the Andhra people and the happy memories of my connection with them will not let me boycott Andhra, even if I wish to, though some of the Andhra workers do sometimes vex one into wishing to boycott the province till they set themselves right. They are fine men. They have got the patriotic spirit. But some of them are workers only so-called. They are all leaders and when everybody wants to lead there is nobody to serve, no one to obey and in the exercise of that false independence the people are neglected. I hope the workers to whom these remarks may apply will not say to themselves or to me that they are no worse than other provinces. It would be a wrong way of looking at the right thing. After all Andhra men and women who at one time gave promise of being the first in the field for real civil disobedience must not be satisfied with being as bad as the rest. Those who seek to compete for civil disobedience have to prove their capacity for exemplary obedience, restraint and discipline. Andhra, which might have easily been first in khadi and every one of its departments, has yet to come up to the mark. But I must not exhaust the whole of my battery of criticism. I must reserve it for my forthcoming visit, as I had never given up the idea of visiting Andhradesh. As a suitable month could not be set apart this year, the idea was to reserve Andhra for next year unless I could give it, as it was then thought, the first fortnight of December. God has however upset all my plan and the whole of the programme for the second half of this year has been dislocated. And

if I am at all fit and well and there is no accident I would like to be in Andhradesh not for a few days but for a month or two next year. I have therefore told Konda Venkatappayya that if the people will still have me, I would like to visit Andhra early next year and combine rest with work. I must not be expected to rush through space and programmes as before. Let the workers also realize that I shall be devoting the stay in Andhra to khadi work alone.

Untouchability work is no doubt part of my being. But that work is largely included in khadi work. For, it is designed to level up those who occupy the lowest rung of the ladder with those who are at the top. It is the cotton thread which beginning in the humblest cottage of India and reaching the highest in the land can alone indissolubly bind the two and make them feel akin. I know that the Andhra workers are very ambitious. Let their ambition percolate down to the lowest stratum of society and all will be well.

A WELCOME STEP

A correspondent from Holakere in Mysore writes:

I am highly glad to inform you that the people belonging to Lambani community of my taluk have completely abstained from drinking toddy and other liquors since a month and a half. It was in the Lambani Conference held in this town at the end of last April that they had taken an oath not to touch any liquor, prostrating themselves before the evening sun. Since then they have not swerved from their oath. If anyone of that community is seen near a toddy shop, he is strictly dealt with by the *Naik*, *Tajaman* and *Karabhan* of that hamlet. Their women carry to us every day the glad news, there are no broils at their hovel and that they lead a very peaceful life. This is an instance to show that your movement of purification had entered our State even before your entering it.

I congratulate the Lambani community upon the great step they have taken, and hope that they will not slide back like many who did so after the exultation of 1921 had subsided. Let me invite the attention of the leaders of the community to the case recorded in these pages¹ of the Raniparaj² people of whom those abstainers who took to the charkha as a means of occupying their time and attention, not only had no hankering after liquor

¹ In *Young India*, 26-5-1927, under the title "Among Raniparaj People"

² Literally, 'hill-people' as renamed by Gandhiji; formerly known as Kaliparaj, which meant 'black people'.

but were able to double their savings. For, they not only saved what was spent upon the drink but they also added to their income by saving in the cost of clothing. It is the universal experience of temperance reformers that if the people who take pledges do not usefully occupy their time, the hankering returns and it becomes too strong to resist the temptation. I hope too that other villages will follow the example of Holakere and that when I am enabled to begin my tour in Mysore, I shall receive, side by side with glowing accounts which I have been promised of the progress of khadi, accounts also of eradication of the drink habit.

Young India, 16-6-1927

4. RANIPARAJ INQUIRY COMMITTEE

Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel has lost no time in embarking upon the work of the Committee that was only recently appointed at the Raniparaj Conference¹. The following extracts² from the interim report of the second tour of the Committee will be read with interest:

The Committee visited eighteen villages recording statements of witnesses from 47 villages in the Chikhli and Bulsar Talukas and is in the State of Bansda. It reflects credit upon the Bansda State that the Committee is able to give a glowing account of the interest that the Maharaja Saheb of Bansda is taking in his people. But all the good that is undoubtedly being done by His Highness to his people is really undone so long as he considers it necessary to derive an income from the drink traffic. No doubt the fact that the three neighbours adjacent to the Bansda territory, that is, the British, the Gaekwad and Dharampur have no prohibition makes it difficult for Bansda to carry out the policy of successful prohibition. But great things can not be done without great sacrifice and great measures. Bansda can not only lead the way by declaring out and out prohibition, but can then agitate for prohibition in the neighbouring States. The chief thing is to be prepared to sacrifice the drink revenue. An immediate beginning can be made by deciding not to use that revenue for any purpose, however laudable it may be, save for that of carrying on an in-

¹ Held on March 16, 1927; *vide* Vol. XXXIII.

² Not reproduced here

tensive anti-drink propaganda amongst the tribes given to drink. For, there is no doubt that any State that seriously wants its people to give up the evil habit cannot be satisfied merely with making it legally impossible to indulge in the evil habit, but to find out the cause of the habit and to educate the people to give it up. In the end, no State need suffer by depriving itself of the drink revenue. The inevitable outcome of any policy of prohibition carried out side by side with constructive work of the nature suggested by me must result in an ever increasing prosperity of the people and therefore of the State. India is the most promising country in the world for carrying out total prohibition for the simple reason that addiction to drink is not considered respectable or fashionable and is confined only to a certain class of people.

Young India, 16-6-1927

5. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN¹,

Here is a letter from Dr. Jones² which perhaps you would like.

I hope you had my long letter³, and I do hope also that you will make it a point to see Mr. Sastri⁴. When are you coming here? I wish you could also go to Phoenix and see Manilal and his wife.

Yours sincerely,

MISS SCHLESIN
POST BOX No. 2284
JOHANNESBURG

From a photostat: S.N. 12360

¹ A Jewish girl who was Gandhiji's private secretary for many years in South Africa

² Stanley Jones

³ Dated May 22, 1927; *vide* Vol. XXXIII.

⁴ V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Agent-General of India in South Africa

6. LETTER TO W. B. STOVER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,¹

June 16, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter². Your suggestion³ is undoubtedly interesting. But I do not understand why you fall foul of the charkha which the millions can easily take up; whereas your suggestion requires technical knowledge and character at its back. Your friends of the West have made a god of literacy. I wonder what Jesus, whom you call the "Lord Christ", would say if he came in flesh and saw the people of the West crazy over a knowledge of letters, wealth and passing the best part of their time and life in seeking happiness from the external. Supposing that every person of education gave mechanically half an hour to teaching every untouchable, of what avail will it be to him or to the untouchables? And why are you so much enamoured of the material progress of Japan?⁴ I do not know whether the material has gone side by side with the moral progress. I have no wish to judge the Japanese. I have not even the data for doing so even if I wished. But neither literacy nor wealth without the moral backing has any attraction for me. And do you know why I swear by the charkha? I do so because not merely the untouchables but millions of other people in India are starving because they have no work and because now they have even become too lazy to work. I am therefore presenting the charkha to the starving millions as there is no other simple productive work which can be presented to the millions; and I present it to the educated and the well-to-do people of India as an example for the rest.

I have the highest regard for my missionary friends, and that very regard makes me warn them in season and out of season

¹ Permanent address

² Dated May 2, 1927

³ W. B. Stover had written: "I suggest that instead of the charkha every day, you set the example and put the challenge to all of educated India, to choose someone of illiterate India, and spend a half hour a day in teaching this illiterate person. I would suggest that the teacher and the one taught be of different castes. This idea carried to any great extent throughout the land would bring almost a revolution in the thinking of the people."

⁴ Stover had written: "Japan has attained the highest literacy."

against misinterpreting the message of the Bible. You tell me, "you have taken the Lord Christ for your leader and guide. There is none better." You do not mind my correcting you. I regard Jesus as a human being like the rest of the teachers of the world. As such He was undoubtedly great. But I do not by any means regard him to have been the very best. The acknowledgment of the debt which I have so often repeated that I owe to the Sermon on the Mount should not be mistaken to mean an acknowledgment of the orthodox interpretation of the Bible, or the life of Jesus. I must not sail under false colours.

Your letter is sincere and I felt that I could not better reciprocate your sincerity than by putting before you frankly my position.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

W. B. STOVER, Esq.
MOUNT MORRIS
ILLINOIS, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 12521

7. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

DEAR DOCTOR,

I see that the mental distance between you and me is really growing. I can sympathize neither your salic [*sic*] in astrology nor in black magic. They may both be substantial sciences; but they are sciences which I think we should avoid. As a matter of fact I do not attach so much value to things pertaining to the body as the wish to exhaust every available means for sustaining¹ the body or for keeping it in order as it has only a very limited importance in the scheme of life. I apply also equally limited means and therefore continually exclude those means which may seem to me to be of doubtful moral value. So then, if I err at all, I shall err on the right side. Excess care of the body and explorations into astrology—and what not—for the sake of that care-taking means going further away from his Maker, and seems

¹ The source has "subsisting".

like putting the shadow before the substance. I would not trouble you to travel with me.

Doctors here consider that 150 is normal blood-pressure for me and they have no misgivings whatsoever about my being able to resume moderate touring next month. I am certainly getting daily stronger physically.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. S. KELKAR
C/o J. G. GADRE
NEW BHAT WADI
BOMBAY 4

From a photostat: S.N. 14157

8. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the pamphlet which I know I shall be interested to read.

I do not know when I shall be in Madras, I hardly think on the 23rd of July. But in any case I do not know whether I shall have gained sufficient strength during the year to conduct the retreat for hours' length as I was expected in the programme you had sent me before the breakdown in my health. The whole of the Southern tour is undergoing a radical transformation. I do not think Mr. Rajagopalachari has yet been able to reshape it.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
7, MILLER ROAD
KILPAUK, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 14158

9. LETTER TO MANECKBAI BAHADURJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

I have your letter. Do please continue to write giving me all the titbits of Panchgani, of your own beautiful nest, telling me all about the birds that come and go.

Bangalore is the finest and cleanest place I have seen as yet in India. I have no doubt, it too has its dark corners. But I have not seen them as yet. And I suppose I shall not be able to see them either, because I am taken for my walks only to beautiful places. And its climate at least at this time of the year is certainly glorious. It is cool and yet not too cold. Its flowers also are very beautiful and various.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. MANECKBAI BAHADURJI
OMRA HALL
PANCHGANI

From a photostat: S.N. 14159

10. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

MY DEAR RANGASWAMI,

I have your letter enclosing extract from the Rev. Mr. Holme's letter for which I thank you.

I have also your letter about the forthcoming special meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. I do not suppose you expect me to take any notice of this letter. I presume it is a multiplex copy sent *pro forma* to all the members of the Working Committee.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR
DESHBANDHU BUILDINGS
MOUNT ROAD
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 14160

11. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your letter. Of course I can agree with every word of what you have said about typewriters and typists. There is nothing inconsistent between your letter and my presentation. I simply told¹ you why there had been seeming indifference about getting the very best typists.

But the advertisement idea does not commend itself to me. We have so many limitations that people who know us will not care to apply, and if strangers in search of employment but not knowing what we are do apply, it would be a waste of time for them and us to trouble them. I am writing this from bitter experience. But I again entirely agree with you that there is certainly within limitations scope for educated Indians to find themselves in khadi work. And that process is gradually going on. There is much more that I can write on this subject. But it is unnecessary to tax you on details. I was long with my previous letter because I was anxious to discuss some principles.

I am entirely at one with you that Maganlalji should have all the assistance he needs and that whatever assistance we take should be of the best type available; and if I felt that advertising in the manner you suggest would do it, I should go in for it. And, in any case, Maganlal can certainly advertise. There is no principle at stake, nor is there any question of much expense.

I know that you never implied that there was anything wrong in handling human excreta and I also know that you yourself did the thing yourself in the Ashram. What I told you was that the untouchables themselves would feel as I suggested. That would be wrong I know. But I simply mentioned the difficulty. They will take up the kind of work you suggest only after some of us have done, and done it successfully.

I don't know whether it was your prompting or not, but I have got a new edition of Dr. Kellogg's book on diet. It is a big volume and it is lying in front of me. It is enough to make one giddy even to contemplate reading that volume especially

¹ In letter dated May 27, 1927; *vide* Vol. XXXIII.

when I have mortgaged every available minute for the work I have on hand and which I feel I must do. I shall therefore profit more by the correspondence lessons that you are giving me out of your experience on dieting than by reading the big book.

The new shorthand idea appeals to me. And if someone at the Ashram will go in for it, I would not mind spending the money. You will therefore press the suggestion on the people at the Ashram.

With love to you all,

Yours,

R. B. GREGG, ESQ.
C/o S. E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 14161

12. LETTER TO MIRZA M. ISMAIL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I esteem your letter enclosing copy of your address to the Mysore Representative Assembly. I shall go through the whole of it as soon as I get a few moments. But I have already gone through the portion kindly marked by you referring to the untouchables. It gave me great joy.

I had also your letter about the birthday greetings.

I hope to be able to visit Mysore before the 15th of next month and pay my respects to the Maharaja Saheb.

Yours sincerely,

MIRZA M. ISMAIL, ESQ.
'LAKE VIEW'
MYSORE

[PS.]

I now learn that the marking was done here.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 14162

13. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I am sincerely sorry for having given you offence. I was certainly not unbalanced when I wrote to you. I have really believed that it was part of your philosophy to beat an opponent in views with any stick that came your way. Indeed I can give you names of those who have valiantly defended that philosophy. But I shall not argue with you. If we meet, I shall give you chapter and verse for the belief I have held about you. But of course I like your energetic contradiction. For I can only like repudiation of a philosophy which I have considered to be morally indefensible and utterly false. Only my philosophy has room for holding in respect those who have a false philosophy but who do not know that it is false. You have quoted Jamnalalji in your support. I hardly think he will assist you. But I will preserve your letter and ask him about it.

Now for your question. I have certainly said that untouchability as practised today in Hinduism is the darkest blot on it. But that is different from saying that it is part of Hindu religion as you have made me say. For you will find in my writings an emphatic statement to the effect that untouchability is no part of Hindu religion, and that if it was, I should renounce Hinduism. Indeed, you will find in the cutting you have sent me the following sentence: "I find no authority whatsoever in Hinduism for treating any portion of the human family as untouchable." I have called it an excrescence.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. S. MOONJE
NAGPUR CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 14616

14. LETTER TO KUVALATANAND¹

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE

June 17, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I now understand all you say about the abdominal massage and massage of the heart. Of course it has been continued ever since I wrote to you. I simply wanted to clear what I did not understand. I have told you that in the physical application of these exercises, I propose to go by faith in you. Whilst I shall present my doubts to you so long as I do not understand your explanations, they shall be final for me.

I want to give the practice of these yogic exercises a full trial, if only because I regard them of all the methods of medical treatment to be the freest from danger.

After I wrote my letter² of the 8th, I took a forward step which I hope you would not consider hasty. On re-reading your notes, I saw that you expected me to go up to 30 degrees angle. So, after writing to you, I immediately broadened the angle but limited the duration to five minutes in accordance with the instructions. But I have my own doubts as to the angle being 30, because I have not yet secured an accurate measuring instrument. Not being satisfied with the raising of the cot, I looked about for a plank which I have now secured. The cot has a wooden surface. I spread on it not a mattress but a padded rug, and I take the *sarvangasan* on it with the help of the board. It is now infinitely better than the previous exercises. Mahadev has been measuring the thing, and he thinks that the angle at which I take it is nearer to 50 than 30. I am not satisfied that it is anything like 50. Be that as it may. I am feeling no discomfort. Today will be the 4th day, and the duration is only five minutes. Blood-pressure is taken every Sunday, and if I find that the pressure has at all gone up, I shall ascribe the rising to the angle and drop the exercise till I hear from you in reply to this. And I shall drop it, in any case, if you think that I have gone too far.

There is another passive exercise which I have been taking, not very regularly but fairly regularly, which I used to take when

¹ In reply to his letter dated June 14

² *Vide* Vol. XXXIII.

I was convalescing after dysentery and when I was physically much weaker than I am today. And it is to raise the legs at right angles to the trunk and keep them for two or three minutes there; that is for removing any fatigue there may be after the walk; and then, I have the legs in that straight condition bent as much as can be bent without any strain whatsoever towards the head, whilst the trunk is lying on the bed. This I take to strengthen the muscular exercise for the abdomen. I think I even mentioned to you that this was given to me by Dr. Kelkar whom, I understand, you know. And he has been writing to me to press that exercise on me. Both these things, keeping the legs straight and at right angles to the trunk and gently bending the legs towards the head seem to me to do good. There is no fatigue left and there is felt after the bending exercise a forward movement about the bowels.

I am still not taking tepid water and salt in the morning; for, the enema continues and I am now able to retain the water for half an hour. But I do take a tumbler full of water by the nose. Less than half of the quantity is spilt in the process of drinking through the nose. So I think about four ounces of cool water I take in this way just after the mouth wash.

The walking exercise in the morning and in the evening continues, 40 minutes each time. But the distance covered is greater than when I began after coming to Bangalore. It is nothing less than two miles every time.

I have not yet dared to go beyond two teaspoonfuls of melted butter. Milk has been increased, I think I told you, from 30 to 40 ounces and *bhakhari*¹ or oatmeal two ounces remain.

I enclose your original notes which you need not return because I shall remember the contents. You will please send me any further instructions you may think desirable.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMUT KUVALAYANANDJI
KUNJAVANA
LONAVLA

From a photostat: G.N. 5048; also S.N. 12596

¹ Thick cake prepared from wheat flour
XXXIV-2

15. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

BANGALORE,

Jeth Vad 2 [June 17, 1927]

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. You want my permission to go and see Chi. Harilal. A son need not seek his grandfather's permission to see his father. No one can stand in the way of a son's wishes. You have now come of age, and that is another reason why there should be no question of my giving you permission.

All I can do is to explain to you your responsibility, and this is my advice in regard to your seeing Chi. Harilal. I believe he is at present following a wrong path. He leads an immoral life. He has become an addict. He has forgotten his dharma, and, therefore, he is not fit to exercise his right as a father. I regard him as suffering from a kind of disease. His disease is not physical but spiritual, and spiritual disease is more dreadful than a physical ailment. It is not, therefore, your duty to go to him to comfort him; on the contrary, it is your duty to keep away from him. You, I and his friends and well-wishers should employ spiritual non-co-operation against him. If you have intended to go to him to reform him I regard your idea as worthy of support, and in that case I would facilitate your going. But just now it seems that you wish to go because of that letter. I feel, therefore, that your going to him will mean your encouraging him in his intention. Moreover, if you wish to go to him in order to reform him, you are not yet, from a practical point of view, fit and sufficiently mature to undertake such a task. From that point of view, you are yet a child. You are still studying. It is my desire, and also my effort to see that as you study, you should so develop your soul that you may acquire the power to do what I could not in regard to Harilal, and you should so impress him that the moment he sees you he would abjure his evil habits. I have been bringing up both you brothers with that aim in view. If you have the capacity, you will be able to benefit from such education. I would, therefore, advise you to write to Harilal and tell him firmly that until he gives up his addictions and his immoral life and is able to support you all, or until you are able by

the power of your *tapascharya*¹ to awaken him from his slumber, you cannot go and see him. I do not, however, insist that you should forthwith accept my advice. So far, Harilal used to admit his weaknesses, and has been saying that he would try to shake them off; but now he has started writing letters against me in the papers. I have not seen those letters, but I know their purport. Harilal says that it is I who have forsaken my dharma, not he, and that I have been propagating the Buddhist faith. And he holds that such propaganda is harmful to people's welfare and, therefore, regards it as an evil. His rebellion, he says, is against that evil. And he intends to take you brothers away from under my undesirable influence at the first opportunity. As such are his views, you are likely to be assailed by doubts. If you have the slightest doubt whether my ideas are right or Harilal's, I think you should not be led away by my ideas. Hence this is my further advice to you that you should humbly consult the teachers under whom you have studied or those among the elders with whom you have come in contact in the Ashram and who command your confidence. Put all your problems before them and act as they advise. If you ask me to solve your problems, I too will help. The *Gita* which all of us study daily, which you have been learning by heart and trying to understand with great devotion, says that we should get our problems solved with the help of those whom we regard as our elders by earnestly questioning them with humility. We should have faith in them, accept what they say as true and act accordingly. I wish, and I advise you, that you should do what I have suggested. Do not reach a hasty decision. Do not act with childish immaturity. Try to understand what your duty at the present moment is, and act with courage and determination in accordance with that duty. Consider, not what you would like to do, but what you should do. You may show this letter to anyone you may wish to consult. I shall wait for your reply. Let me know how both of you are.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7703, Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

¹ Self-suffering as moral discipline

16. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 18, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. If you can at all bear the strain of travelling, the weather here should suit you remarkably for, it is superb at this time of the year. But you must not undergo any strain or risk. You should come only if the doctor advises.

I am glad everything is now being removed to Sodepur. Let the boys go to Wardha by all means. But the distance to Ahmedabad need not put them off, if they will be happier at Sabarmati, as perhaps they are likely to be. Wardha has not the convenience that Sabarmati in some respects has, especially when Jamnalalji is not there as he will not be now for some time.

With love to you all,

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
HOME VILLA
GIRIDIH

From a photostat: G.N. 1574

17. LETTER TO MANORAMA DEVI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 18, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your pathetic letter. It is evident it is not written by yourself. As you seem to know some English you may write to me in your own English whatever you like; better still write in Bengali. I don't understand it myself, but I have Bengali assistants here permanently with me. And tell me what your age is; what you propose to do with your parents? Have you their consent to leave them? Are you keeping good health? Will you travel alone if permission is given to you to come to the Ashram? Do you know Sjt. Gopabandhu Das? And if you do, will you please see him and let him write to me? And even if you do

not know him, will you make it a point to see him? He is well known in Orissa. He is President of the Congress Committee and he was at one time member of the Legislative Council. He is to be found either at Cuttack or at Puri. Who is your friend who has written the letter for you? I would like to help you. But before I know how I can help you, it is necessary for me to have all the particulars.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI MANORAMA DEVI
CHANDISAHI
CUTTACK (ORISSA)

From a photostat: S.N. 12578

18. LETTER TO FIROZA P. S. TALEYARKHAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 18, 1927

Your note was received last night; but it was handed to me only just now. I am sorry you have been laid up. I was wondering why you had not come in as you had intended to do. Of course I shall be delighted to see you whenever you come. And do please bring Lady Banerjee with you. Of course you know the hour and you won't mind if there are other visitors sitting or coming in at the time. Then you could come any day without notice. But please do not strain yourself to come if you are at all unwell. I shan't misunderstand your not coming. We are both convalescing and, in any case, now that I know who you are there need be no formality whatsoever.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI FIROZA P. S. TALEYARKHAN
3, RESIDENCY ROAD
BANGALORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14163

19. LETTER TO PRINCIPAL, SANGLI INDUSTRIAL
AND AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 18, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your very full letter. Only one further inquiry I would esteem it a favour if you would answer. Is there any difference in the ratio of nutrition between fertilized and sterile eggs? In your school, do you also teach cattle-breeding and dairying?

Yours sincerely,

THE PRINCIPAL
SANGLI INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL
SANGLI

From a photostat: S.N. 14164

20. QUARRELLING IN THE NAME OF RELIGION

A gentleman has sent me newspaper cuttings regarding the dispute which occurred in Udaipur State between Shwetambars¹ and Digambars² and suggested that I should go through them and give my opinion about it. For one thing, in my present state of health I cannot spare enough time to read so many newspapers carefully, and, even if I had the necessary time and energy, it is not my practice to form an opinion on any matter—no one should, I believe—from what one reads in the papers. I, therefore, do not know which party is at fault, or more at fault. However, I shall express the thoughts which occurred to me after a fairly close reading of the cuttings.

The language of the writers indicates their partisan spirit. Each side blames the other and considers itself innocent.

I found no essential differences between this dispute and the writings about it, on the one hand, and the Hindu-Muslim quarrel and the writings about it on the other. There is more bitterness

¹ & ² Sects of Jains

in the latter and the language of the writings is more venomous, but the difference is only one of degree.

The fact is that we have forgotten the very meaning of religion. Everyone fights to prove that his own view is the right one. There is no trace of any desire to understand what religion means, in what it consists, by what marks it can be recognized, and how it can be preserved.

We have a right to expect more wisdom from the Jains; they are votaries of *syadvada*¹ and claim themselves to be the only followers of the path of compassion. They should display tolerance; that is, be liberal towards others who hold different views. We should know that other people will be attached to what they regard as truth quite as much as we will to what we regard as truth. Even when we feel that our opponent is at fault, we should not get angry with him but should act towards him with charity.

As I read these articles, however, I felt that even in Jain homes and temples texts of *syadvada* and compassion merely decorate old books and have no other significance. I realize this in experience again and again. Where the doctrine of compassion is followed in action, it seems to be limited to feeding ants and preventing people from catching fish. I have also observed that if, in displaying compassion in this manner, cruelty is shown to human beings, that is regarded as dharma.

Raychandbhai often said that when Jainism was embraced by Vaniyas², it was interpreted in a Vania spirit, and knowledge and courage, which should be the signs of compassion, vanished almost completely; compassion became synonymous with cowardice and thus came to be despised.

Moreover, dharma and wealth are eternal enemies; but the Goddess Lakshmi took up her abode in Jain temples and the result was that religious issues, instead of being solved through *tapascharya*, came to be settled in courts of law through argument by lawyers. That is, those who could pay more could get a point of religious principle interpreted in their favour.

This picture may appear somewhat exaggerated, but it is not so. I know the Jains. I know them and the principles of their religion as intimately as I do Vaishnavism and Vaishnavas. Some in their anger believe me to be a Jain. Others in their love wish that I should become a Jain. Some Jains are pleased by my partiality for a few members of their community. I have learnt

¹ The doctrine of the plurality of truth

² Members of a community traditionally engaged in business and commerce

much from their books. My contact with many Jain friends has helped me much. All this has prompted me to write what I have done above and thereby awaken those Jains who love their religion.

Why should there be hatred between Shwetambars and Digambars? Their religious principles are the same. The few differences which exist are easy enough to tolerate. They are such as can be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, like the differences between the followers of the *advaita*¹ and the *dvaita*² doctrines.

There are numerous monks and nuns among Jains, and they have plenty of spare time. Why should they not engage themselves in real *tapascharya*? Why should they not acquire the highest knowledge? Why should they not seek to impart to others the benefit of their experience?

Jain youths seem to be engrossed in earning wealth like their elders. Why should they not, though living the life of householders, become like *tapasvis*³, generous-hearted and the very embodiment of the purest spirit of compassion?

I was asked to give my opinion about the Palitana⁴ affairs, and now I am asked my opinion about the sorry dispute in Udaipur. The correspondents on this occasion, too, are young friends. This time I have given an opinion which probably they never expected. I do not distinguish between Hindus and Jains. I can establish the unity of Hinduism, that is, the Vedic doctrine, with Jainism, with the help of *syadvada* itself. For myself personally, I established long ago the unity of all religions with its help. The dispute between Shwetambars and Digambars cannot be settled through newspapers nor in a court of law. Both parties should atone for their errors and purify themselves, or one party should do that on behalf of both. Those who cannot do even this should stop talking about religion, be humble and keep silent.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-6-1927

¹ Identity of the individual self with the universal Self

² Separateness of the individual self from the universal Self

³ Those who practise *tapascharya*

⁴ A Jain centre of pilgrimage in Saurashtra

21. SWADESHI v. FOREIGN

A friend from Kathiawar writes as follows:¹

Many readers will immediately see the fallacies in this letter. Even so, since one often hears similar views expressed by others, it is necessary to explain again the meaning of swadeshi as clearly as one can. Moreover, we suffer a great deal through an abuse of the idea of swadeshi. If many of the activities which are being carried on in the name of swadeshi were stopped and the effort spent on true swadeshi, we should achieve our goal much earlier.

I am sure that I have become more and not less scrupulous in following the vow of swadeshi. I have been following it, as I had conceived it in 1920, and am following it even more scrupulously today. We may certainly accept a foreign needle, since it is a useful article and can be assimilated. By accepting it, we harm no industry or craft in the country and its acceptance, therefore, does not throw anyone out of employment. On the contrary, the needle provides work to hundreds, work which benefits the country. Foreign cloth may be good in quality, and cheaper, may even be offered free; even then, it should be rejected, for its acceptance has ruined crores of our countrymen. We had been producing cloth in our own villages, and have found no other work in place of that industry. We committed a great sin in abandoning it. Its abandonment resulted in starvation, and that led to an increase in disease, crime and immorality. If ever the time comes when the people of this country will have another, more honest occupation [than spinning and weaving] and when the cotton cannot be grown on the soil of this land or when the cultivators themselves will prefer to grow another, more profitable crop, then the vow of swadeshi cloth may serve no useful purpose. If future generations, reading the literature of this age, regard this vow as an immutable principle and even at that time apply the principle of swadeshi to cloth, they will show themselves foolish and will be acting like people who drown themselves in their ancestral well instead of swimming across it. My reason cannot conceive

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had criticized Gandhiji's view that foreign articles which could not be manufactured in India and which were useful should be readily accepted. For Gandhiji's views *vide* Vol. XXXIII, "The Cow and the Buffalo", 22-5-1927.

of such a time ever coming. Whether it comes or not, there can be no two opinions that in our present condition khadi is the purest form of swadeshi and we can even say that now there are no two opinions about it.

Raw materials worth crores of rupees are produced in this country and, thanks to our ignorance, lethargy and lack of invention, exported to foreign countries; the result is, as Shri Madhusudan Das has pointed out, that we remain ignorant like animals, our hands do not get the training which they ought to and our intellects do not develop as they should. As a consequence, living art has disappeared from our land and we are content to imitate the West. As long as we cannot make the machines required for utilizing the hide of dead cattle, worth nine crores, available in our country, I would be ready to import them from any part of the world and would still believe that I was scrupulously keeping the vow of swadeshi. I would believe that I would be only discrediting that vow by refusing, out of obstinacy, to import those machines. Similarly our country produces a great many things with medicinal properties, and those come back to us in the form of a variety of drugs or other articles. It is our duty to import any machines, and obtain any help, which will enable us to utilize these things in our own country.

Swadeshi is an eternal religious duty. The manner of following it may, and ought to, change from age to age. The principle of swadeshi is the soul and khadi is its body in this age and in this country. If in the course of time this body perishes, swadeshi will assume a new body but the soul dwelling in it will be the same. Swadeshi is service, and if we understand its nature we shall simultaneously benefit ourselves, our families, our country and the world. Swadeshi is not intended to serve self-interest but is pure altruism, and hence I call it a form of *yajna*. It certainly benefits ourselves, but there is no room in it for hatred of others. There can be no absolute duty of not importing anything at any time; only, we may not import anything which may harm the country. Nor can it be accepted as an absolute principle that everything that belongs to or is produced by one's own country is good. Anything, whether indigenous or foreign, which is good and serves our interest, should be readily accepted, and likewise anything, indigenous or foreign, which is bad and harmful should be rejected. The country produces a huge quantity of liquor, but all of it deserves to be shunned. There is no reason to believe that, if the whole country gives up drinking, those engaged in the liquor trade will be ruined. Their

present business harms themselves and the country and they will not starve if they lose it; there will be other, better occupations which they can follow.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-6-1927

22. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, A.I.S.A.

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 19, 1927

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the collections made in Benares, it is quite correct to state that they were all made for the Gandhi Ashram, Benares. They should therefore have the whole amount not as a loan but as a grant. It ought to appear in our books because the collection was responsibly made. It should be entered as earmarked for Gandhi Ashram, Benares, and there would be no need to get the sanction from the Council for the grant.

As to Laxmi Behn and Harjivan, my opinion is that the whole thing should be left to Rajendra Babu to manage, such help being given to him as he may require for facilitating the execution of his decision. This thing may be further discussed when we meet.

As to Gulbarga collection, I am conferring with Gangadhar-rao. But the position generally is this. Whilst it is convenient for us to know from which province collections have been received, all these collections are on behalf of the Association. If the idea is that the whole of the Maharashtra collections should be necessarily spent for Maharashtra, and that other provincial collections should be similarly treated, the doctrine is untenable. And I made it clear during the tour at all the places where the question was raised that whilst the places at which the amounts were collected will be borne in mind at the time of considering the allocation of funds, the Association could not undertake necessarily to spend funds in the place where they have been collected. It is therefore a matter of little importance what description is given to the entry of Gulbarga collections in our books. Theoretically, it is open to the Association to spend the whole of the Maharashtra collection, say in Orissa and *vice versa*. That it would be gross abuse of authority and that such abuse would break the Associa-

tion is also true. But I mention this merely to illustrate my meaning and to show that so far as ledger entry is concerned, it is a matter of no moment where a particular collection comes from.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION
AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 19782

23. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 19, 1927

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I have your two letters. I am glad you have opened your heart to me. The very act of doing so often soothes one. Do not therefore apologize for writing at length and in whatsoever manner the spirit moves you. I am glad you have got the permission from mother for taking to simpler dress. I would like you to open out your heart to both father and mother as you have done to me. Never mind their laughing you out or smothering you with ridicule or putting you down even in anger. You will take it all in good part and with a smile on your lips. They have a right to do all those things. And when they recognize in you, in spite of ridicule, anger, etc., a seriousness and determination which shall not be moved, they will let you do what you like. How often have not young men and women built castles in the air only to be destroyed later. Why should you expect people to regard you as an exception? If you are an exception, you will stand ridicule, contempt and worse, and come out better through the ordeal. After all God *must* put us through the test.

I share your grief over your having to give up that dress on which mother has lavished so much time and so much love. But love is its own reward. And parents do not regret the trouble they have taken after things which their children outgrow. Let all those things of yours go to Sohaila when mother is satisfied that you will never be likely to want them.

Mira has left Rewari and before she migrates to Wardha for perfecting her Hindi, she has come to Bangalore where she will be for a few days.

I have not got the poetic language to describe the weather here, but it is really fine at this time of the year in Bangalore. Of course we have not the Himalayas here. But I suppose you know Bangalore better than I do. I am still progressing.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9603

24. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 19, 1927

I have your brief letters. But I can read through them your grief as well as your victory over it. You are used to all kinds of charges and innuendoes. Sastri is now there. So after you have been there a month or so with him, I expect you will be returning. How I wish you were with me in Bangalore. You would have then been my door-keeper and enjoyed the glorious weather here. As it is Rajagopalachari and Gangadharrao are the gate-keepers. I see very little of them. They put in their appearance only to bring any visitors and take them out. I know nothing about their trials and their attempt to shield me. As Rajagopalachari himself has written in his latest story¹, "Illnesses of rich men or great men have a charm and romance all their own." One needs to be really a pauper to understand the chastening effects of illness. I am not going to give you any of the innumerable painful titbits from this end. You have enough of them all there. This is therefore merely to assure you that you are ever in my mind.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12362

¹ "The Blind Girl of Vellalapatti" in *Young India*, 23-6-1927

25. LETTER TO HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Have you not unconsciously made a mistake and written to me when you should have written to the Poet? Or, have you really thought that I know the literary men and artists of Europe? If you have, it is then a case of distance lending enchantment to the scene. I have hardly any correspondence even with M. Romain Rolland. I do not think that I have written more than two letters to him. The European correspondents are all common readers of *Young India*. I do not even remember their names, and they will not be the persons whom you have in view. Now, please tell me what you will have me to do.

Yours sincerely,

H. CHATTOPADHYAYA, Esq.
KODIALBAIL P.O.
MANGALORE

From a photostat: S.N. 12773

26. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU¹

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 19, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I must still dictate, though this dictating is not to be regarded as any indication of weakness of body. I am simply literally following doctor's advice in order to store up energy for future use. Whether energy is being thereby stored or not remains to be known.

I have your telegram. If you could have braved the travelling through the hot parts, you would certainly have been amply rewarded and forgotten the heat of central India. I wonder whether chamber work could not be done outside Allahabad. Phe-

¹ In reply to his letter dated June 11

rozeshah used to drag clients after him. Of course it was cruel. I wonder whether for reasons of health you would not be justified in putting clients to the trouble of following you to a cool place.

Things, as they are shaping in the Congress, confirm the opinion that it is not yet time for Jawaharlal to shoulder the burden. He is too high-souled to stand the anarchy and hooliganism that seem to be growing in the Congress, and it would be cruel to expect him to evolve order all of a sudden out of chaos. I am confident, however, that the anarchy will spend itself before long and the hooligans will themselves want a disciplinarian. Jawaharlal will come in then. For the present, we should press Dr. Ansari to take the reins. He won't control the hooligans. He will let them have their way; but he may specialize in the Hindu-Muslim question and do something in the matter. It will be quite enough work for him in the coming year to solve the almost insoluble problem.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12867

27. LETTER TO MATHURADAS

BANGALORE,

Jeth Vad 5 [June 20, 1927]¹

BHAI MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. May your resolve to observe *brahmacharya* endure for ever and God give you the strength for it. Has this vow been taken with the willing consent of your wife? If it is, its observance will be easier.

Do not admit defeat about khadi; this work is a kind of *tapascharya*. We do not give up our faith in truth, or forsake its practice or its propagation, even if the whole world habitually speaks untruth; in this age and in the circumstances in which we are placed, we should act in the same manner in regard to khadi. What are you doing there now, and how do you carry on your work?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3763

¹ Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this day in 1927.

28. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BANGALORE,

Jeth Vad 5 [June 20, 1927]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get your letters regularly. I feel happy. Whether the cause of this regularity is the regret I expressed in Bombay or the new broom in the form of Sushila is a question which only you two can answer. If my regret is the cause, may the memory of that regret remain fresh with you for ever, and if the new broom is the cause, let it never grow old.

My letter is late by a week. I will be more careful hereafter. Your regularity will keep me careful. When elders become old, the young can keep them vigilant. Perhaps you know that, had Gorakh¹ not proved stronger than Machchhendra, the latter would have fallen. If you do not know about this, ask me; I will explain the story in my next letter, and shall have a good subject to write upon.

I am very glad to hear that Sushila has put on weight. Has her deafness decreased somewhat? It is also good news she has started type-composing. She can become capable of managing a press. A girl of 17 or 18 can train herself in no time. The burden of household chores on her should not increase. For that, if you keep your food requirements simple as you used to do formerly, a great deal of time will be saved. Food should be cooked only once and that too should be very simple, so that the kitchen may not occupy all one's time. Manilal knows all this art, if, that is, he has not forgotten it. A woman is not born merely to cook meals. Since cooking must be done, both [husband and wife] should take a hand in it. If they do and work in a spirit of service, they can easily discover many ways of saving time.

You may take as much as you can digest from all this that I have written and leave the rest.

I shall certainly try to write a letter by every mail, but remember that the translation of the *Gita* which I have given you must also be counted among my letters. That translation is intended for people like you, and now it is being done at a faster rate.

¹ A disciple who saved his Guru Machchhendra, when the latter seemed to have yielded to the attraction of worldly life.

Let me know if you do not understand or like its language, so that I may be more careful and may revise that part which you find not easy to understand. This will help me as much as it will help you.

I am glad to know that you continue to read the *Gita*. You have sent your photograph to Ramdas. It does not seem that you have sent one here.

I shall respect your wish that no one else should read your letters, but they contain nothing private. Everyone naturally wants to hear news of you; if, therefore, you wish that no one should read your letters, you should from time to time write a letter to Chhaganlal which all people in the Ashram may read. All the same, I have respected your wishes and not passed on your letters to others.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4721

29. LETTER TO LAKSHMIKANT

BANGALORE,
Jyaishta Krishna 6 [June 20, 1927]

BHAI LAKSHMIKANTJI,

I got both your letters. I wanted to have a talk with *pujya* Malaviyaji and therefore could not reply to your previous letter immediately. I think you should not have written an open letter. The problem of caste-reform is very serious and difficult. It calls for great patience. Malaviyaji bears no ill will towards you. After having talked to him I am convinced that there was a difference between your way of working and his. *Pujya* Malaviyaji desires reform of Hindu society; he also wants the narrow caste restrictions to be liberalized but he believes that reforms cannot be effected just by the pioneering efforts of one man. But then he is making all possible efforts if only according to his own method. He would never think of annoying you.

Now here is my view. Whatever you did was right. Reformers should carry on their mission without cutting themselves off from Hindu society, bearing no malice and with perfect love of the Hindu religion, and while doing so, put up with all the hardships that might come in their way. Those who violate

social conventions in the course of their activities must submit to the sanctions laid down by society and have a liberal attitude towards society while suffering them. This is what is called *satyagraha*. It is not for a social reformer to first disregard society's laws and then to feel sore about having to suffer punishment for this disregard. I hear if you go through some formal atonement you can be re-admitted to the caste. I am against submitting to such atonement. We atone for what we regard as sin. What you have done is no sin. It is therefore needless, even improper, to atone for it. But if you are not prepared to suffer excommunication you can return to your caste by going through the prescribed atonement. I was pained to see in your open letter a reference to Islam which looked like a threat. Every man follows his own faith not because he wants to oblige others but because he considers religion as the lifeline without which life appears impossible to him. If the tenets of Hinduism are to bring you *moksha*, there is no ground to revolt against it even if all the Hindus of this country were to oppose you.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 12674

30. A LETTER

[Before June 21, 1927]¹

I have your letter. Books like the *Bhagavata* seem to have been written to meet the requirements of many different kinds of men. It is possible that immoral people will seek in it support for their immorality. If a man reads the *Bhagavata* with the desire to find God on every page of the work, any evil that may be present in his mind will disappear. The right course appears to be to give up reading a book which fills us with bad thoughts. The *Bhagavata* is not a historical work. It does not give an account of a historical Krishna. Krishna is the *atman* and the Gopis are the many senses. They are obedient servants of the self-controlled *atman* and dance before it as it wills.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

¹ The source has this letter before the entries for June 21, 1927.

31. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 21, 1927

MY DEAR BHRRRR,¹

Better late than never. I have your letter at last. Why should marriage ceremonies cost so much time, trouble, money, and make even 70-year-young people look old for all the time and trouble taken over marriages of their children? What is there extraordinary in a marriage to elate parents and their children and almost make them mad with joy? Is it not an everyday occurrence like birth, youth, old age and death itself? They are all necessary changes attendant upon life. But of course all this is philosophy after the event. If I had a marriage in prospect, perhaps, I should write differently. But even if I intended to be married, there does not appear to be in existence a parent mad enough or sane enough to give me his girl in marriage. I can therefore safely deliver lectures to young people and old people who take pleasure in wasting their time and money over marriages. However I shall forgive all this extravagance, if Sohaila properly puts down her husband when he endeavours to restrain her freedom, and by sheer force of exemplary character breaks down the wretched *purdah* in Lucknow and the neighbourhood; and of course the propaganda of khaddar is the least I expect her to do.

I am still gathering strength and I am not likely to leave the South for another two months. It must therefore be some time before I shall have the pleasure of hugging you and touching your silvery beard and chatting on all matters important and unimportant. Raihana must be allowed to grow in her own way.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9559

¹ This was a form of greeting used by Gandhiji and Abbas Tyabji for each other.

32. LETTER TO DEBENDRA NATH MITRA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I must apologize to you for entirely forgetting to give you my suggestions regarding agriculture. My impression is that unless improvements which are within the means of the poor are taken to their very farms as they were in South Africa, success will be slow. My recent studies more and more demonstrate to me the necessity of the State taking virtual control of all the cattle. It seems to me that unless the cattle problem is properly tackled, they will either be killed out mercilessly or we shall be. And while things are allowed to take their course, we are both being ground down. Destruction of uneconomic cattle, I hold to be impractical and criminal in our country. We must therefore take charge of the uneconomic cattle and find ways and means of supporting them as economically as possible, getting what return we can out of their manure and out of their hide, bone, etc., after they die. We should cease to allow a single calf to come into being except through proper bulls. Your farm should therefore, in my opinion, contain facilities for proper dairying and tanning and there should be series of experiments to find out the relative value of manure in connection with the feed of unused and unuseful cattle. I do not know whether you followed the series of articles that were published in *Young India* on the cattle problem. There are of course other things I might mention; but they require legislation and [are] therefore outside your jurisdiction and control.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DEBENDRA NATH MITRA
GOVT. AGRICULTURAL FARM
FARIDPUR (EAST BENGAL)

From a microfilm: S.N. 12917

33. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 21, 1927

DEAR LALAJI,

I do not know whether this letter will reach you. I simply passed on to you about the trust what I felt.¹ I know that you will do whatever is proper. I surely do not need any explanation.

I hope you are gaining strength day by day and taking rest without being concerned with the events that may be going on about you. I would like you to do what Asquith did in the midst of the War. He took, when his health threatened to break down, a fortnight's cruise in the Mediterranean and cut himself off from all communications. We may not afford to take any such cruise, but we can afford to retire unto ourselves untouched by the environment.

Yours sincerely,

LALA LAJPAT RAI
NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB
WHITEHALL PLACE
LONDON S.W.1

From a photostat: S.N. 14166

34. LETTER TO VICTOR MOHAN JOSHI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 21, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Chhotalalji tells me you were grieved that I had not gone to Almora up to now. When you give me sufficient inducement about khadi work, you will find me taking my convalescence in Almora instead of Bangalore. Meanwhile, you have Prabhudas there, and whatever service may be rendered to him will be ren-

¹ *Vide* Vol. XXXIII, "Letter to Lajpat Rai", 1-5-1927.

dered to one who bids fair to become if he is spared by God a faithful servant of the nation.

Yours sincerely,

VICTOR MOHAN JOSHI

ALMORA

From a photostat: S.N. 14167

35. LETTER TO DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 21, 1927

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your letter. I shall deal with the appeal¹ in the columns of *Young India*. I would suggest your going from door to door and making collections. There is really no other way. If I could at all come there, I should join you.

I cannot invite you and Basanti Devi to come here because I am still half-bedridden and not moving about. In the month of July the doctors expect that I shall be able to do a little travelling. But it won't enable me to put forth energy that I should have to if I invited you and took you from place to place. For that you will have to give me strength when I come to Bengal if I am ever enabled to do.

How is Basanti Devi getting on? She and Mona and Baby are all playing me false. Tell them I shall have my revenge one of these days. I am here at least up to the end of the month.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY

36, WELLINGTON STREET

CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 14168

¹ Vide "Chittaranjan Seva Sadan", 30-6-1927,

36. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
*Jeth Vad 7 [June 21, 1927]*¹

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have just now received a telegram from Swami to the effect that your mother fell dead while she was walking with you. I can offer only felicitations on such a holy death. We should all pray for such a death. Her bodily presence with us was a source of support and comfort, and if we feel grieved for the loss of that feeling, our grief would be nothing but selfishness.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From Gujarati: C.W. 7392. Courtesy: Valjibhai Desai

37. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

*Silence Day, Jeth Vad [7, June 21, 1927]*²

SISTERS,

Received your letter.

That I praised the bangles made of yarn does not mean that all of you should start wearing them. Such innovations will endure only if they proceed from the heart. And I wish that none of you should do anything merely for fear of not conforming.

Now I visit daily a milk-producing centre. It gives rise to various thoughts in my mind—one of which I shall put down here. Just as you have undertaken the work of the store, so also you can help to run these milk centres. Thousands of cattle perish daily owing to our ignorance and idleness. I find that this is work that can be done as easily by women as by men. The sturdy cowherd-women of Kathiawar appear before my mind's

¹ Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927.

² The source has June 23, 1927, presumably the date of receipt. The source again has *Jeth Vad 6* which, in 1927, was *kshaya*, not reckoned. *Jeth Vad 7*, June 21, 1927 was a Tuesday.



eyes. We are already farmers, weavers and sweepers; we need to be cowherds too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3654

38. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

BANGALORE,
*Jeth Vad 7 [June 21, 1927]*¹

BHAISHRI BHANSALI,

I liked your letter very much because you had opened your heart in it. Manibehn has today given me the news that your seven-day fast is progressing well. A seven-day fast is child's play for you. I had not, therefore, felt worried over it at all. But I see an error in the argument you have advanced about the reason for the fast. The best thing is not to do a thing about doing which we have a doubt. If we have started doing a thing, and then we get a doubt about it, true expiation consists in abandoning it that very moment. Any other atonement which excludes this is useless. If your demand for a new house was wrong, you cannot atone for that error by means of a fast. If you see no error in that demand, atonement is not called for at all. If you have even the slightest doubt about having committed an error, to seek to cover it up by means of a fast amounts to committing a second error, because by undertaking a fast we banish the thought of error from our mind and we ought not to do this. Expiation such as fasting is a form of self-punishment and punishment can be only for a thing which we cannot undo. If we abuse someone or beat him, we cannot take back the abuse or the beating. We may, therefore, inflict on ourselves punishment like a fast; such punishment brings about self-purification, and also restrains us from making a similar mistake again. But suppose that we have stolen someone's money. At the time of doing so, we felt that there was nothing wrong in it but later on we got a doubt about what we had done and felt afraid lest we had done a wrong; then, at that very moment, we ought to return the money to the owner and thereafter, if we so wish, we may undergo self-punishment such as a fast. Returning the money is like returning

¹ From the reference to the addressee's seven-day fast

a loan and hence that does not amount even to punishment. You may perhaps argue why you should return the goods so long as you are not sure that stealing is bad, and tell yourself that you will return them when you decide that it is indeed bad. Many sins are, and have been committed in the world through such reasoning. Being moral requires that wherever there is a doubt, we should decide against our own interest. But we may go a step further and suppose that, so long as we have a doubt about stealing being wrong, we shall also have a doubt about the desirability of returning the money. Even then, in such circumstances a fast certainly is not a means of resolving such a doubt. On the contrary, the fast may prove an obstacle in our effort to discover the truth.

Here I have only analysed the ethical principle for your benefit. I myself have no doubt whatever in your case. You had a right to ask for a roomier house in a quiet part, for the inmates of the Ashram regard your living in the Ashram as conducive to its progress. The best place for the experiments which you have been making is the Ashram, and such experiments are an inseparable part of its life. Hence any facilities which you consider necessary for those experiments and which others accept as necessary should be provided to you if the financial condition of the Ashram permits them, and it is because this was the position that a house has been got ready for you. Moreover, if hereafter it is felt that such an arrangement ought not to have been made, you can move into another small house that may be vacant. On that score, too, we need have no fear. Moreover, Lilabehn may get more accustomed to the conditions there and come to like living in simplicity, and you may become so detached that the atmosphere round you will not affect you at all; then you yourself will decide to leave that house and ask for another. And if I see that you or Lilabehn has become weak, I shall not, as an elder and guardian, hesitate to speak to you about it. If I shrink from doing so, I shall fall from my dharma. Thus you are safe in every way. I could have explained all this in my reply to your very first letter. It even occurred to me to do so. But I did not think it advisable to do that and stop your fast abruptly. I was also afraid that I might shock you by advancing such an argument when you were about to start your fast. Hence I deferred writing this. Now you are in a position to appreciate my argument objectively, since the fast is now out of the way. There is a sound reason behind my plea. If you remain complacent because of the fast and believe that there is no reason now to feel

doubtful about the propriety of having put up a new building, that would not be right. The truth is that it is our duty to feel doubtful about the propriety of every one of our indulgences, and it is complacency to feel no such doubt. If we do not feel doubtful in this manner, we shall never be able to practise complete renunciation. Hence this caution. I have also something to say about the other portions of your letter, but this is enough for the present. I shall attend to those portions when I have the time. The matter is certainly not urgent.

Please have no hesitation in writing to me whatever you wish.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12194

39. LETTER TO SATAVALEKAR

June 21, 1927

It is the common experience that *brahmacharya* is not essential for the conservation and development of bodily strength and so on. Hence there is the danger of overlooking the importance of *brahmacharya* in tracing the close association between *brahmacharya* and physical strength. We have fallen lower than the *asuri*¹ countries. The reason for it is that having fallen from our own position we are not able to attain another either. We are afraid of accommodating all that the *asuri* tradition implies, whereas we lack the strength to translate into action the *daivi*² traditions. It is for this reason that attempts are being made in the country today to bring in the *asuri* traditions—this is what I see everywhere. But these traditions simply cannot work. The people cannot digest them. And as they are lax in following the *daivi* tradition, they stand where they are. Hence I believe that since we follow the *daivi* tradition our acts must be pure and we must somehow save ourselves from copying the *asuri* tradition.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

¹ Demoniatic

² Divine

40. LETTER TO DEVI WEST

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 22, 1927

MY DEAR DEVI,

I have your letter. I am getting better though I am still weak and convalescing at a cool place.

Yes. Manilal is still at Phoenix looking after *Indian Opinion*. His wife is now helping him. He tells me she has already learnt the compositor's work. She is a good girl and you would have liked her if you had seen her. Manilal is very devoted to her and both of them seem to be very happy. Manilal has all new men now on his staff.

Yes. Mirabai¹ is still with me. At the present moment, she is even at Bangalore where I am. She has come to be with me for a few days. Then she goes to a branch of the Ashram for perfecting her Hindi.

How do you occupy your time there? Devdas is with me, and Ramdas is at his post in a khadi workshop.

I am sorry you do not see *Young India*. I am now asking the manager to put you on the free list. Do you not get *Indian Opinion*? If you do not, you should write to Manilal without any hesitation to send you a copy. But if you would rather not write, I would do so gladly on hearing from you. You ought to have been getting both *Indian Opinion* and *Young India*. I should have myself enquired about the latter, but I took it for granted that you saw the paper.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
BHAI

MISS DEVI WEST
22, GEORGE STREET
LOUTH
LINCOLNSHIRE (ENGLAND)

From a photostat: S.N. 12506

¹ Mirabehn

41. LETTER TO H. HARCOURT

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 22, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote to you in my last letter¹ that I will send for the copy of your book² you had kindly sent me. I have now got it and having the leisure of a convalescent, I went through the book from end to end. I read it with interest. I liked your humorous touches especially with reference to the complainant who the accused said in his evidence had struck the latter's fist with his nose. I have remembered that joke well because you have unwittingly summed up my own belief. I have certainly run up my nose against many a fist, and have hitherto come out unhurt. I have found in my experience that when instead of putting up your nose for the man with the fist to play with, you try to ward off his play by holding it back, you really get the knock-out blow. But I must not try to present you my philosophy of life if the method I stand for can possibly be described by such a dignified word.

But I would say one word with reference to your estimate of me. I ask you to believe me when I assure you that I endeavoured to see myself in your looking-glass. But I have failed to recognize myself in it. I do not wonder at the picture you have drawn of me. I hope that I do not entertain any elongated notions about myself. But I cannot help expressing my grief that a man so sincere like you should have failed to study an honest movement which somehow or other caught the imagination of thousands upon thousands of men and women who had hitherto been left untouched, with more attention than you evidently felt called upon to give. Many English friends are now beginning to see that my movement was an honest attempt through non-co-operation to bring about hearty co-operation of equals, instead of an enforced and superficial co-operation between parties one of which regarded itself as superior to the other.

¹ *Vide* Vol. XXXIII, "Letter to H. Harcourt", 1-6-1927.

² *Sidelights on the Crisis in India* by H. Harcourt and Chhotu Ram; Harcourt was a member of the Indian Civil Service and Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur and Chhotu Ram was Minister for Agriculture in the Punjab Government,

I shall await your letter¹ telling me what your challenge was. And if I find it to be still capable of being taken up, and find myself equally capable of taking it up, you may depend upon me responding to it.

Yours sincerely,

H. HARCOURT, Esq.
119, GIPSY HILL
LONDON S.E. 19

From a photostat: S.N. 12523

42. *LETTER TO G. K. DEVADHAR*

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 22, 1927

MY DEAR DEVADHAR,

I thank you for your letter. I did read about your election in the papers. It was a foregone conclusion. I therefore did not send you my congratulations. And though in the opinion of the outside world, it is an honour conferred upon you, I know as well as you do that for you it is a matter of greater responsibility and greater opportunity for service. You call me a friend and supporter of the Society. I regard myself as something much more. I have never considered myself as anything but a member of the Society. Though I am not officially a member [and] am not taking any active part in its activities, [this] does not cause me the slightest worry. My abstention is my quota of service. When a member of a numerous family cannot see eye to eye with the rest although his heart is with them, he serves the family best by non-interference, always wishing that his head may be where his heart is so that he can render active service. Has it not been said that those also serve who wait and pray? You have therefore a right to command my service whenever you think that with my limitations it can be of any use to you.

I do not expect to be at Sabarmati before the end of August, for doctors here tell me I shall be able to do a certain amount of

¹ In his letter dated July 12 Harcourt wrote: "The challenge I referred to was yours and addressed to my countrymen in general. I tried to reply but I have no copy now" (S.N. 12531).

touring from next month, and if I can do so, I shall want to finish as far as I can the Southern tour that was mapped out and over which immense trouble was taken by Rajagopalachari and Gangadharrao Deshpande. If I must regard your headquarters as Poona, it is just as easy for you if not easier to come to Bangalore as to go to Sabarmati. And I am here till about 10th of July. You can come here therefore if you at all can and will. I shall always have my grievance against Mrs. Devadhar, for she is under promise to come to Sabarmati and stay there a few days, a promise she has never yet fulfilled.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. G. K. DEVADHAR
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 14169

43. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 22, 1927

I have your letter from Geneva. I hope you have received all my previous letters including the last one which was in English. I see that you are observing things with your customary keenness. I hope however that you will form no hasty conclusions as so many of our superior men have often done. All is not gold that glitters. The converse of it is also equally true. All is not dirt that appears dirty. And how often do we not see the two co-existing, riches and poverty, virtue and vice, Jekyll and Hyde, God and Satan? The combination that you have described of wine-drinking, womanizing, etc., with physical strength, orderliness, common honesty and ardent patriotism is not to be denied. The fact seems to me to be that one virtue does not lead at any rate all at once to all the other virtues, and a particular quality ceases to be a virtue when it solidifies into a custom. Vegetarianism with us is really no virtue. We are vegetarians by custom. It would be a sacrifice for us a large majority of vegetarians to be otherwise. But vegetarianism in Europe will be a virtue. It would be an active force in the life of a European vegetarian, and

if he is a seeker of truth that one reform will lead him to many others. Foreign visitors to India have remarked upon our general domestic happiness and family affection. This quality is part of our being. A father loves his children and children render willing obedience to parents without much effort on either side. People in Europe have found by experience that it is necessary for them to extend the family idea and regard the society to which they belong as a nation. Hence patriotism there is not a virtue which needs to be cultivated. Want of it would be noticed as a strange thing and would lead to excommunication of the type familiar in Europe. They have also understood the doctrine of honesty being the best policy and so up to a point, you will find that quality abundantly in evidence. With us patriotism has got to be cultivated. We have in practice not gone beyond family affection as a nation. But I shall not elaborate this point further as I must keep an appointment which I have put off to finish this letter.

It will be an agreeable surprise to me if you succeed in enlisting 500 paying subscribers for *Young India*. It would be further proof of European interest in what *Young India* stands for.

I am making steady progress. And doctors are of opinion that I should be able to resume touring on a moderate scale early next month.

Yours sincerely,

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
C/o THOMAS COOK & SONS
LUDGATE HILL
LONDON

From a photostat: S.N. 14170

44. LANCASHIRE BLOCK

The long delay which took place in the publication of the Tariff Board report was almost a certain indication of the rejection of any recommendation for granting further protection to the great mill industry. The Government will not offend Japan by discriminating against it and favouring Lancashire. And it dare not displease Lancashire by applying it any protective duty. For Lancashire is the Government in substance; and to grant India effective protection against Lancashire would be almost like committing suicide.

This question of protection for the mill industry against Lancashire and other foreign competition is a question of life and death for India as it is supposedly one of life and death also for Lancashire. To realize the truth of this statement, one has merely to look at the table of imports. Imports from Lancashire are by far the largest of all the other imports, nearly half of all British imports. Lancashire has risen on the ashes of India's greatest cottage industry and it is sustained by the exploitation of the helpless millions of this land. The indigenous mill industry is really regarded as an interloper, and if it could be decently squashed in the interest of Lancashire, it would be suppressed without ceremony. The stupendous interest of Lancashire is allowed to override every moral consideration. The existence of that industry harms both Lancashire and India. It has reduced India to pauperism, and India's pauperism reduces Lancashire to moral bankruptcy.

The mill-owners of India will never be able to vindicate their position in the face of this almost insurmountable obstacle, unless they courageously make common cause with the people and force protection from the Government. It is the country's right. If a country has the right to determine the composition of its inhabitants, and to exclude those whom it considers to be detrimental to its existence, it has a greater right to determine the composition of the goods that it would permit to be imported within its borders and to exclude those that it may consider to be harmful to its population.

There can be no doubt that foreign cloth is the most harmful among all our imports. The mill industry may for a time flourish somehow, it may also show a temporary prosperity by various manipulations or by favourable accidents; but unless it secures effective protection against all foreign cloth, it is bound to go under sooner or later, and certainly much sooner than one expects. Some day or other there is bound to be a real sustained mass awakening, whether mad and undisciplined but organized in its own madness, or (as I hope), disciplined and organized non-violently. And when it comes the indigenous mill industry, unless it is recognized as their own by the masses, will perish in the flames that must overtake foreign cloth. It is time for the mill-owners to make common cause with khadi and wrest protection from an unwilling Government. There is room enough for years to come for both, if the province of each is now marked out and rigidly respected. It is then possible for them to prosper in spite of Government aloofness and even insidious oppo-

sition. But this presupposes intelligent sacrifice on the part of the mill-owners, a vital combination amongst them and an iron determination to carry through their programme.

I was glad to notice an authoritative repudiation of the rumour that a cut in the wages of the mill-hands was contemplated as a reply to the Government's decision. It would have been suicidal. What is wanted at this time is not antagonizing labour, but making common cause with labour and regarding mill-hands as much proprietors of the mills as the share-holders and agents. If the share-holders supply the capital, the labourers supply the muscle for the conversion of capital into cloth. A combination, therefore, between the mill-owners, the mill-hands and the masses would be an irresistible combination which the Government dare not ignore. Will the mill-owners have enough foresight, courage and patriotism for the task? The 1s. 6d. ratio, it was contended (with a great degree of force in the contention), was a hit against that great industry and a gift to Lancashire. The resolution on the Tariff Board report is another such hit and therefore another gift to Lancashire. I wonder whether this last hit will stir the mill-owners to right action. No petition, no resolution in the Legislative Assembly will be of any use unless it is backed by effective mass action, and, in my humble opinion, it is not possible to conceive of any milder mass action than I have ventured to suggest.

Young India, 23-6-1927

45. NOTES

THE FORTHCOMING TOUR

If the progress I am supposed to be making continues to the end of the month, Drs. Subbarao and Krishnaswami Rao who have been kindly attending on me tell me that I should be able to resume a moderate amount of touring taken in easy stages. In view, therefore, of the possible resumption, I would like the workers and all concerned to bear in mind that I shall not be able to sustain the strain to which I seemed to be equal up to the end of March. Processions and noises must be abandoned and people should be repeatedly warned against crowding round me shouting and touching my feet; nor may I be expected to visit institutions in the places to which I may be taken. One meeting and informal discussion with workers is about all I shall be able to manage

per day. It is, I know, ungracious to use Chikballapur as my illustration to show how not to do it. The people of Chikballapur have been extraordinarily kind to me personally. A friend who noticed the exquisite attention paid to me at Nandi Hills by the representatives who used to come from Chikballapur from time to time to see that everything was supplied and in order, and who noticed the loving attention of the volunteers all drawn from representative families of Mysore, could not help remarking that it was a wonderful manifestation of selfless love that the people of Mysore exhibited, in that I had done nothing, specially for the people of Mysore, I had hardly even seen the country except for the flying visits to Bangalore. I could not help endorsing the spontaneous remark made by this friend. It was so true. The reception committee of Chikballapur left no stone unturned to anticipate my wants and supply them at considerable sacrifice of time and money. I would therefore gladly have avoided using Chikballapur for an unfavourable illustration.

But what happened there was so typical that I must not omit to mention it. Although there was to be no procession, and I was to be taken quickly and quietly to the place of the meeting¹ which was to be perfectly noiseless, the leaders and the people lost their heads when they saw my car, and though the sun was beating hot, Mr. Hamza Husain Saheb, who is the chairman of the general reception committee and who was escorting me, had to submit to the pain of seeing the hood taken off and the motor carried in procession at a snail's pace. Officiating Dewan and ex-Police Commissioner though he was, he knew that at this moment he was connected with a representative of India's paupers, and as such had meekly to submit to the risk of all the good that Nandi had done to his charge being undone. I pleaded with the leaders whom I had seen in Nandi and who were near the car to restrain the enthusiasm and quickly take the motor to the meeting place. "We shall soon reach it", was the only reply I could get. The meeting, too, was none too orderly, and on the top of that, though the majority of the audience did not understand English, the address was read to me in that language in spite of my repeated warning in these pages that it would be more in keeping with the surroundings, at least at meetings where poor people gather in thousands, to conduct proceedings in their mother tongue supplying me when necessary with a translation in Hindi.

¹ *Vide* Vol. XXXIII, "Speech at Chikballapur", 5-6-1927.

But this much must be said for Chikballapur. Its mistakes too were due to affection. I was told that they never had a popular meeting of this character before. They naturally did not wish to damp the enthusiasm of the people. They lost their heads themselves for the moment, being caught in the wave of enthusiasm, and for the Hindi translation possibly they had not a single person in Chikballapur knowing Hindi. But let the other local reception committees profit by the unavoidable mistakes of Chikballapur. Let them have previous rehearsals in checking their enthusiasm. Let them translate it into khadi purchases and hard work at the spinning-wheel. That would be an intelligent, profitable and national application of the energy created by the enthusiasm, and it would not only gladden their guest but will also strengthen his body, mind and soul.

INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS

Lying on my back and trying at times, in obedience to medical instructions, to take my mind off serious reading, I chance upon advertisement sheets of newspapers. They are sometimes painfully instructive. I see often in respectable papers advertisements of a lewd nature. The headings are deceptive. In one case, the heading was "Books Relating to Yoga". On looking at the contents of the advertisement, I discovered hardly one book out of ten having any reference to yoga; all the rest had reference to sex, suggesting that young men and women may indulge in sexual pleasures without coming to grief, promising to divulge secret remedies. I came upon worse things which I do not propose to copy in these pages. Hardly a newspaper is free from liquor advertisements, and advertisements regarding medicines designed to debase and corrupt youthful minds. The editors and the proprietors who are themselves known to be pure and opposed to drink, to smoking and such other evils, are at times found not to be averse to deriving an income from advertisements which are obviously intended to spread the evils which they shun. The argument sometimes advanced is that it is not possible to conduct a newspaper on any other condition. But is it necessary to conduct newspapers at any cost? Is the good that they do so great as to outweigh the evil that mischievous advertisements cause? We have a journalists' association. Is it not possible through it to cultivate a uniform code of morals among them and to create a public opinion that would make it impossible for a respectable journal to violate the prescribed code?

46. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

BANGALORE,
June 23, 1927

RAMESHWARDAS
DHULLA

DIFFICULT PROVIDE FASTING TREATMENT FOR YOU
AND MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR YOUR WIFE SAME
PLACE. CAN YOU SEPARATE? WILL YOUR WIFE
UNDERGO OPERATION IF NECESSARY BY MALE DOCTOR?
SEND FULL REPLY BY POST.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 739

47. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 23, 1927

MY DEAR SPARROW,

I have your postcard. I am grieved to learn that you were still ailing at the time of writing. But I hope that by the time this reaches you, you will be at least just as healthy as I seem to have become. You must not prolong your sickness beyond certain limits and those limits have been crossed already.

For your edification, I send you a free rendering by Krishнадas of an article contributed by a fellow passenger of yours. I wonder if she has correctly reported the conversation ascribed to you.

The weather in Bangalore is extremely nice. I expect to be here yet for about 20 days by which time doctors expect I should be able to move about without difficulty.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12524

48. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVEL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you duly received my previous letter¹. You sent me your book at an opportune moment. Whilst I am convalescing, I have nothing to do but read what little I can and dictate a few letters and a few articles. I therefore took up your book with a view to learn the central fact of your programme, policy or teaching whatever it might be described as. I have just finished it and I am now dictating this letter. I am sorry to say that the book has not made any appeal to me. What is true in it, I began doing in 1909-10 when for the satyagrahis of the Transvaal a friend gave me the use of 1,100 acres of land which he and I called Tolstoy Farm. There we were doing exactly what you have suggested. Boys and their relatives everyone was expected to work, and boys had some tuition, plenty of work and plenty of play. If they were examined today some of them might perhaps say they would have preferred all play and no work, and the more modest ones might say they would have preferred more play and less work. But I was unable to advance any claim on behalf of that colony which you advance on behalf of yours. I wish that your claim could be sustained.

I very carefully studied the association's appeal to busy people. The picture suggested by your diagram No. 1 of the future, I fear, for a long time to come will remain a mere picture. c.d. may in course of time be magnified into C.D. But it will be absorbed as it is being absorbed now by A.B.

You have headed three chapters, "A Lesson from Switzerland", "Belgium" and "America". On going through the chapters, I find nothing of what these three countries are doing except a bare mention. I am not wiser about the Swiss method, no wiser about the Belgian or the American method. And your advice to copy the rapid locomotion of America, makes me giddy even to read it. I suppose, if you succeed (say) in converting Calcutta into a second New York with moving platforms and fourfold railways, etc., etc., and take me there to witness the marvellous perfor-

¹ Dated June 15, 1927; *vide* Vol. XXXIII.

mance, I should fall dead at the very sight of the thing. I have numerous, I was going to say innumerable, American friends. But they have all assured me that there is beneath the untold wealth of America, degradation, superstition and vice incarnate and the inequalities between A.B. and B.C. are enormous and that B.C. is being successfully exploited by A.B., in many cases B.C. not even knowing how. As I think of your chapter on America, I recall what Stead wrote many years ago, "If Christ Came to Chicago". And if my present informants have not misled me, what Stead wrote now nearly 40 years ago is truer today than when he wrote that biting article.

Of the Belgian and the Swiss examples I can say nothing; for, I know nothing. And you have given neither facts nor figures. Your book reminds me of what Ruskin wrote somewhere and which may be thus paraphrased: If men become machines and if bone and muscle could be removed from these machines, they could be flattened into bricks of a required size and these human bricks could then be consolidated into a majestic pyramid and made to do anything that the controller of these bricks desired. But unfortunately or fortunately you have to deal not with machines but with bony, intelligent muscle each having its own individuality and each pulling its own way. I wonder if your lineal cities, co-operative schemes, garden suburbs and transformed educational methods all drawn up with exactness and printed in beautiful type will change society in the manner you expect without devising some means of appealing to the soul within. I conclude with what I have said before to you: show some concrete example on a fairly large scale of successful policy so that a practical man like me may learn something.

Yours sincerely,

CAPTAIN J. W. PETAVEL, Esq.
BAGH BAZAAR
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 14171

49. LETTER TO HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE

June 24, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter¹. I send you the enclosed for what it may be worth.

You have tempted me with a bribe². But a bribery being an unlawful thing, is always given in cash; whereas you have asked me to accept a credit note. However I rely upon cashing the note on presentation whether by me in person or by my successor in office as the representative of *Daridranarayana*.

Yours sincerely,

PS.

[All] letters pass through one or two hands before they [come] to me for signature. One of the . . .³ me for letters of recommendation. As far as possible I avoid giving letters of recommendation to anybody. If there is any truth in the information given to me, I hope you will protect your and India's honour. I delayed the posting of the letter in order to find from the voice within what my course of duty was in the light of the information. This morning I felt I must send the letter with the enclosures and pass on to you the information in the hope that you would take it in the spirit in which it is offered and not think ill of the informant or me. The former has no malice against you.

May God be with us all.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12773

¹ Dated June 22. The addressee had requested for a letter of introduction from Gandhiji for use in Europe.

² The addressee had promised that on his return when he founded the National Theatre, "the language of the plays shall be Hindi and that of the scenes or costumes, khaddar".

³ The source is not legible here.

50. LETTER TO P. K. CHARLU

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 24, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter, and also a copy of your journal. I have glanced through its pages. I am unable to congratulate you upon it. There is great deal of hasty ventures of this kind. I personally think that publication of magazines is being overdone and such overpublication can do no good to the nation. I fail to see from your magazine that you have a special message to give. What is really wanted at the present moment is silent and steady work. I am a believer in the proverb that example is better than precept. I wish indeed that I could even now wean you from proceeding further with your venture.

I had the privilege of meeting your father in 1896 when I was in Madras.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. K. CHARLU
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER
"DHARMA"
6, SUNKURAMA CHETTY STREET, G. T.
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 14172

51. LETTER TO P. RAJAGOPALA IYER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 24, 1927

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALAN,

I have read the report you have sent. It is good work you are doing. Do not try to do too much at a time, but go forward step by step, and never enter depth beyond your capacity, pecuniary, physical, mental and spiritual; your progress will then be even, substantial and never-failing. You should survey the villages that may be within five miles radius of your place and where the people are receptive, poor because they are idle part of the year, [and] present the charkha to them not by mere speech but

by demonstration. Never offer a higher wage than the maximum fixed by the Spinners' Association, and if the people do not accept your message, do not worry, but do not give up hope. If your faith persists and your action corresponds to the faith, you will find a response sooner or later from the surrounding villages. I take it you are doing at your Ashram hand-ginning, carding and spinning and that nothing is being slurred over but everything done as perfectly as possible.

Please continue to send me a brief monthly report for my personal information. I do not propose to take any notice of it at the present moment in *Young India*. Let the institution take root.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. RAJAGOPALIER

PALAYUR

Via MUTHUPET

From a microfilm: S.N. 19783

52. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU¹

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 25, 1927

MY DEAR MIRABAI,

I have your love letter. I hope Padmaja lying on a sofa was a case of a spoilt babe wanting to be fondled by her mother and not of sickness or fatigue. It is time for her to outgrow her illness and weakness and engage in some stern work and relieve us old people of the burden. Then you may talk of my right to take real rest.

If Dr. Ansari is not to lead us next year, we must find some other man or woman. There are many forces just now working against Motilalji. The burden will be too great for him to shoulder. I do not share the view that we must have a Hindu for the coming year. On the contrary, for the very purpose in view there is no other man than Dr. Ansari.² He alone can pilot a Hindu-Muslim pact through the Congress. His selection will command universal acceptance. Hindus will render him loyal obedience and the fact of the Congress being predominantly Hindu will not—cannot—be disputed by a Mussalman being in the Chair.

¹ President of the Congress in 1925

² *Vide* also "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 19-6-1927.

Think it over and if you have any doubt, wire your departure for Bangalore to discuss the question. I duly sent a wire today.

With love,

Yours,
"WIZARD"

SHRIMATI SAROJINI DEVI
TAJ MAHAL HOTEL
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12868

53. LETTER TO SHAH CHAMANLAL DUNGAJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 25, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I had already intended to deal in the pages of *Young India* with the question discussed by you. Do you want me to make public use of your letter and the facts contained in it, especially the fact that cows or bullocks are every day slaughtered for providing food for lions and tigers?

What is your authority for saying that I am against legislation altogether regarding cow-slaughter prohibition? I would like you to show me the statement ascribing to me the opinion which I have never held. What I have said and what I adhere to is that such legislation ought not to be embarked upon even in a Hindu State if an intelligent majority of the Mussalmans oppose it. I have also added that legislation alone will not save the cow. But I propose to deal with this subject fairly fully in the pages of *Young India*, which I expect you will see.¹

If you are desirous of discussing the subject more fully with me, all the friends who are interested in the question may come any day at 4 p.m. except Monday. To avoid delay, I suggest your making an appointment beforehand so that I should be ready to talk to you precisely at the appointed time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHAH CHAMANLAL DUNGAJI
PRESIDENT
SHRI GORAKSHAKA MANDALI
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12918

¹ Vide "The Cow in Mysore", 7-7-1927.

54. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 25, 1927

DEAR MR. SMITH,

I have carefully gone through both your papers¹. They are interesting and useful for a sceptic. I am a confirmed believer, but ill-equipped, ignorant man. I therefore want you to draw up for me and persons like me—of this there is a respectable number—a tangible business scheme which will enable the reader to immediately put it into practice, if he has skilled assistance and money. Could you therefore please give me such a scheme unembellished with argument? It would give plan and specifications, an estimate of the cost of plants, machinery, etc., and the probable working cost of and returns from the enterprise.

I have been thinking deeply over what you and your men so kindly showed me at the Imperial Dairy Institute.² I have several questions to ask. But for the present, I would like to say that in order to make the institution answer Indian requirements, it needs an addition of two things.

There seems to be no facility for studying methods of castration. The raising of the standard of the breed all over India seems to me to be impossible until the promiscuous herding of cows with bulls is done away with. Castration seems to be the only remedy. The indigenous method is hideously cruel.

Secondly, it seems to me that a dairy to satisfy Indian requirements has necessarily to become a tannery also. Countries of the West have found a short cut to economic success by killing cattle which they consider to be a burden. We in India have to deal with the economics of the cattle question subject to the limitation that cattle have to be supported even when they give inadequate or no return for their upkeep. Hence I feel that a dairy scheme, which does not provide for and against this necessary limitation, must be faulty from an economic standpoint. Whether the Imperial Institution can be expanded to cover these points

¹ "Dairies as an Indian Village Industry", dated January 3, 1927, and "The Need for a Village Dairy Factory System in India", dated June 10, 1927 (S.N. 12926)

² *Vide* Appendix I; also frontispiece,

or not, is not for me to say. But could you give me any guidance or recommend any literature on these points?

And generally what books will you suggest my studying in order to enable me the better to digest the information I have gathered during the few days' visit to the Dairy? If you have any literature in connection with the activities of the Imperial Dairy, and if it is saleable, I should like to buy it.

I cannot conclude this letter without thanking you for all the facilities you kindly gave me in connection with my visits to the Dairy.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM SMITH, Esq.
IMPERIAL DAIRY EXPERT
BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 12927

55. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 25, 1927

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have been often thinking of you and wondering what you were doing. And now to my delight I have your letter. I cannot advise you how you should go about. If you cannot raise money in Kerala for the time being, I feel that money can be supplied if you can produce absolutely reliable workers who will be prepared to render service at a sacrifice. If you have such young men, prepare the list with qualifications and the scheme of work and then you can bring that scheme and discuss it with me. Ultimately of course it will have to be under the control of a board.

So far as a grant from the Municipality is concerned there will be no hesitation in accepting and even asking for it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 14618

56. "NAVAJIVAN" IN DEVANAGARI SCRIPT

I draw the attention of readers to the following letter¹:

I had received this letter as far back as in February. I had preserved it intending to publish it when I had time for it; then came my illness and there was more delay.

The correspondent's object is praiseworthy. I am of the view that all Indian languages should be written in the Devanagari script, and I do not except the Dravidian languages and Urdu from this. But I see difficulties in getting people to carry out this suggestion. So long as there is hostility between Hindus and Muslims, no Muslim will write Urdu in the Devanagari script. I am not suggesting that the Persian script should be given up, my idea is that common books in Urdu should be written in the Devanagari script. At present, however, even this is bound to remain a mere idea. But, without waiting for unity of hearts to be established between Hindus and Muslims, Gujarat, Bengal and other provinces can make a start if they wish to.

All good causes cannot be taken up by one person. Even if anyone tried to take them up, he would only render himself ridiculous. Someone else, therefore, should make this cause his own and devote all his time and energy to it.

However, readers of *Navajivan* can certainly prevail upon me to act upon one of the suggestions made by this correspondent. If a majority of them approve of *Navajivan* being printed in the Devanagari script, I would immediately discuss the matter with my co-workers. I do not have the courage to take the initiative about this without knowing readers' views. I attach greater importance to propagating my ideas about problems over which I have reflected for many years and which I regard as very urgent, than to the popularizing of a script. *Navajivan* has taken many risks in the past, but all of them were for the sake of fundamental principles. I would not take the risk of affecting the circulation of *Navajivan* for the sake of the Devanagari script.

Among readers of *Navajivan* there are many women, as also some Parsis and Muslims. I am afraid that all of them would find

¹Not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that Gandhiji should advocate the adoption of Devanagari as the common script for languages of North India and himself publish the Gujarati *Navajivan* in that script.

it difficult, if not impossible, to read the Devanagari script. If my view is correct, I cannot print *Navajivan* in that script. Since popularizing this script is not my special field of work, I feel that I cannot take the risk of making a start in this regard. Even if the Gujarati *Navajivan* were published in the Devanagari script, the need for *Hindi Navajivan* would remain, for its readers cannot follow Gujarati.

But the correspondent's suggestion is worth being adopted and deserves the support of newspapers, etc. It is also worth ascertaining the views of *Navajivan*'s readers about it, and that is why I have published his letter. I would advise him not to rest content with writing the letter but, if he has the necessary time, to dedicate his life to propagation of his idea.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-6-1927

57. PHILANTHROPIC DOCTOR

ANTYAJAS FIRST

I give below almost the whole of a letter which Shri Amritlal Sheth¹ has written to me describing how Doctor Lala Mathurdas visited Wadhwan and cured the eye diseases of hundreds of sufferers.

In former times, *vaids*² practised only for service. They got enough for their livelihood from what the rich paid them, but that was not looked upon as their fee. They believed that *vaids*' duty was to treat the patients for their diseases, and that God would provide for their livelihood. These days, like others the *vaids*, the *hakims*³ and the doctors, all the three classes, by and large, practise to make money. But philanthropic doctors like Lala Mathurdas prove that all among them are not of that type.

The Arya Samaj has accepted the service of *Antyajas* as their special field of work; it is, therefore, not at all surprising that this good doctor felt very happy in serving them. The workers in Wadhwan deserve commendation for giving priority to *Antyajas*. As for Lala Mathurdas, what commendation can I offer him? The

¹ A Congress worker of Saurashtra; founder-editor of *Janmabhumi*, a Gujarati daily published from Bombay. The letter is not translated here.

² Physicians practising the Ayurvedic system of medicine

³ Physicians practising the Unani system of medicine

account given in the following letter proves that the satisfaction he felt in serving others is his best reward. I publish Shri Amritlal's letter in the hope that other doctors, *vaids* and *hakims* will follow this example of service.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-6-1927

58. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

BANGALORE,
June 26, 1927

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Your letter¹ cuts me to the quick. I do not mind what happens to the Mahavidyalaya but I do mind what happens to a man. I had considered you to be good, strong and immovable under the greatest stress. You have been weighed and found wanting. This desertion in indecent haste is to me inexplicable. I am sorry also for Thadani². He forgot the ordinary gentlemanly behaviour in his hurry to do good.

You may show this to him. May God help you and me.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 875 & S.N. 12599

59. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Sunday Night, Jeth Vad 12 [June 26, 1927]³

DEAR SISTERS,

Received your letter and the attendance book. Please do continue to send me the attendance book. I get to know many things from it.

I have been able to get a great deal of news from Manibehn. Whatever the odds, carry on the work in the store. We regard the

¹ Dated June 20, 1927. The addressee had intimated that he had joined the Sindh National College, Hyderabad (Sind), leaving the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya of the Gujarat Vidyapith, having sent his resignation to J. B. Kripalani, its Principal.

² N. V. Thadani, Principal, Sindh National College

³ The year is inferred from the reference to the death of Valji Desai's mother.

Ashram as our family, and through it we try to learn to look upon our country and the whole world as one family. Therefore as in a family, so in the care of the store we should share one another's responsibilities.

Do not let my suggestions, like that for serving the cow, frighten you. I shall go on writing whatever occurs to me. Accept what you like, what is within your abilities, and do it when you have an opportunity.

Only the meritorious will meet with a death like that of Valjibhai's mother.

Blessed is the son, blessed the mother, and blessed the Ashram where such a death took place. I am also reminded of Vrajlabhai's sacred death.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3655

60. A LETTER

[Before June 27, 1927]¹

Just as it is useless to brood over the past, even so, it is useless to speculate about the future. "One step enough for me", says the voice of wisdom. What does it avail us to know the future? Or why not merge both the past and the future into the present? The present or the past does have a future. And when change confronts us from moment to moment, to think of some remote future is building castles in the air. And only a fool builds castles in the air. The present means our duty at this moment. If we put all our strength into doing our duty, as we know it at this moment, we shall have made the highest human effort. Sorrow springs from dreaming of the future and from lamenting the past. Hence one who concerns himself with the present and does his duty has neither birth nor death.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

¹ The source has this letter after the entries for June 21, and before those for June 27, 1927.

61. LETTER TO TARA MODI

BANGALORE,
Jeth Vad [13, June 27, 1927]¹

CHI. TARA,

I was very glad to read your letter. I refrained from writing to you merely in order to save you the trouble of reading my letter. But you are always before my mind's eye. I wish to see you strong and healthy in body and mind. Anyone who observes a difficult vow like yours in the prime of youth should never fall ill. But it may take ages to acquire such purity of heart. If one has holy merit acquired in previous births, one's heart will change the moment one wishes that it should change. We should try patiently till it does and not lose heart.

It is my firm faith and experience that one whose thoughts spontaneously and constantly flow towards the *atman* can never know sickness. My experience is very limited indeed, but one can judge the whole from a part.

For the present, continue the treatment which you are following and get well. Write to me everything you know about the person who is treating you, his experience, etc., etc. Do not be in a hurry to start walking; do as he directs you.

Write to me when you have the strength and inclination for it.

My health continues to improve. Manibehn and Chi. Keshu have come from the Ashram in connection with the Exhibition. It is likely that the others will come to[morrow.]²

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1940. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

¹ From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

² The source is not legible here.

62. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 28, 1927

MY DEAR DR.,

I have your letter. Of course when I refer to the increase of distance between us, it will only mean the distance in our methods of thinking, never in feeling. My regard for you cannot possibly be diminished no matter however much I may differ from you and your viewpoint. Of course I know that you are as much a seeker after Truth as I am. My impression is that you have your conclusions on very inadequate data, and to found a science upon your astrological observations, on what is now termed as black magic, you require overwhelming evidence of an absolutely unimpeachable character. So far as I know from discussions with you, I do not think you have such data for claiming finality about your conclusions or even [to] warrant preliminary inference. Do you not think that we have got to be far more exacting about things which men equally earnest as ourselves have rejected after trial?

Are you prepared for a fee to go to Dhulia and treat two patients, husband and wife?¹ And, if you are, please tell me what you would charge? The husband is suffering from habitual constipation and it seems to me to be a case for fasting. About the wife's disease I have not sufficient knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14174

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Rameshwardas Poddar", 23-6-1927.

63. LETTER TO MRS. BLAIR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 28, 1927

DEAR MRS. BLAIR,

You are so good. Whenever there is ¹, you never fail to send it to me. I hope that those who have given their names² will persist to the end. Of course it is quite the proper thing to spin wool in Darjeeling. The chief thing is to do hand-spinning. I expect you some day at the Ashram. Of course I am still convalescing, and have to do what little I can in the South.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. BLAIR
MALL VILLA 3
DARJEELING

From a microfilm: S.N. 14175

64. LETTER TO JAMINI BHUSHAN MITRA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 28, 1927

DEAR JAMINI BABU,

I have your letter. The policy of the Association is to discountenance the starting or manning of separate khadi organizations except for good grounds. Of course you might have sufficient reasons. But I do not know. In any case, it will be necessary for you to approach the Association through the Bengal Agent who, as you know, is Satis Babu. You have first of all to satisfy him. Lastly, perhaps you do not know that owing to my illness I have not been able to take an active interest in the proceedings of the Association. I would therefore suggest carrying on your further correspondence in this matter with the Secretary of the Association at Ahmedabad. Whenever there is any necessity, of course he does refer to me.

¹ The source has a blank here.

² To spin at least half an hour a day; *vide* "Notes", 7-7-1927, sub-heading, "Deshbandhu Day at Darjeeling".

I am forwarding your letter to Satis Babu in order that there may be no waste of time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAMINI BHUSHAN MITRA
KHALISPUR ASHRAM
P.O.B. KHALISPUR
(KHEULNA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19784

65. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 28, 1927

No matter what Chi. Shankar does, you should not feel sorry. How can the poor fellow help it? What should he do—keep pace with you, obey Kaki or be in tune with the wind that blows about him? Day by day, I find myself experiencing merely the bondage of human existence. Man has freedom only to attain *moksha*. In whatever else he does, he becomes more and more dependent on others. You can easily check up on this. Then you will not bother about Shankar and Kaki.

What wonder if Bal longs for Kaki's company? She alone is the medicine for him. If we decide not to take Kaki into the Ashram we should offer him his choice. He either stays with Kaki at Belgaum or wherever she would or in the Ashram with anyone we ask him to stay with. I have not yet decided that Kaki must come to the Ashram. I have had no reply as yet to my letter to her. I have been waiting for it a long while.

I welcome Gangubehn staying with you and coming in contact with Gangabehn and keeping it up. Gangubehn appears to be an absolutely innocent girl. I would like it very much if Gangabehn formed a separate group of the women in the Ashram. She should start it gradually and those who want to associate with her may do so. I like, as an ideal thing, even a married couple living apart in the Ashram. It appears difficult to implement the idea at present. But if we once accept an ideal, we can ultimately live up to it. Rather than discussing the ideal, at present, if only all the women who live scattered about come to live together and find it workable we shall have scored a great victory.

The path of non-violence is the most difficult of all. Truth is not a path, it is the goal. There is only one path—that of non-

violence—to reach there, so how could it be easy? So far we have not yet attained non-violence in thought. When we see our duty clear as daylight, we sometimes lack the strength to carry it out. In view of this let us be as careful as possible in our thought and action and live happily. If what the *Gita* conveys is correct I get this same meaning out of it while translating it. . . .¹ Not to find fault in others is to see one's own. Those we see in others were once in us too and, in a sense, are still there. In the process of forgetting the difference of mine and thine, Surdas and others called themselves rogues² and so on.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

66. LETTER TO SURENDRA

BANGALORE,

*Jeth Vad 14 [June 28, 1927]*³

GHI. SURENDRA,

I got your letter. I have written a long letter to Kaka Saheb. I do not understand why he worries. Lakshmidas has not so far sent me his new ideas about khadi propaganda. I have written to Kishorelal about *asana* exercises, and he will write to me after discussing the matter with Nathji. I should like you to send me your experiences of the institutions you visited. For instance, what did you see in Saswad? And in Supa? What did you notice elsewhere worthy of acceptance by us? We wish, if we can, to accept whatever is good in others; we should, therefore, rejoice whenever we see something good and emulate it. If we happen to notice any shortcomings, we should tolerate them, since we too always expect the world to tolerate our shortcomings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9409

¹ As in the source

² *Mo sama kaun kutila khala kami*

³ Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927.

67. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

BANGALORE,
June 28, 1977

BHAI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter as also Chi. Moti's. Neither her elders nor you have been able to cure Moti of her lethargy. Let us now see whether her offspring succeeds in doing that. I hope you have recovered your health completely. It is some satisfaction to know that you have not been infected by Moti. I say this because the experience of the world is that when two persons live together one of them cannot but be influenced by the other. Hence either Moti will be infected by you—it is clear that she has not been—or you will be infected by her. I am all the time afraid that you will be infected by her. Write to me when the delivery is expected, and even otherwise write from time to time. For some time yet I shall remain hereabouts.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL CHOKSI
SEVASHRAM
BROACH

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12140

68. LETTER TO RAJKISHORI MEHROTRA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 28, 1927

CHI. RAJKISHORI,

I wrote two letters to you but got no reply. Now that I have your letter, I write this. Let me know how you are observing your vow. And how are the boys? How is your health? What have you been reading these days? Letters can be received at this address up to 10th July, after which they should be addressed to the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original; G.W. 6659, Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra

69. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

BANGALORE,
June 28, 1927

BHAI BANARASIDASJI,

Your letter. I cannot understand why there was no reply at all from the Ashram. I am looking into it. It appears that I shall not be able to go to the Ashram for nearly two months. There would be nothing wrong if I happened to get your letter during my illness.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2572

70. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter¹ for which I thank you. I am sorry to have to report to you that the blood-pressure taken on last Sunday week had been found to have risen from 150 to 160. The doctors could not make out why the increase had taken place. I then gave them an ocular demonstration of what I had been doing in the way of *sarvangasana*, as also *halasana*, as you have termed the practice I described to you. They urged me to stop the two practices for the time being.² I therefore stopped them. Otherwise too, as I said in my previous letter, I would have stopped *sarvangasana* if the pressure had gone up, till I had taken your advice. Last Sunday the blood-pressure was taken again, and it was found to have gone down by five degrees. I suppose, therefore, it is best for me to continue the suspension of the two practices for a while. In any event, they will remain suspended till I hear from you.

¹ Dated June 22, 1927

² In the draft (S.N. 14176), the words "for the time being" were put at the end of the next sentence.

Everything else continues as before, that is, walks, deep-breathing, the *shavasana* and the massage. I am able to take butter also without difficulty. It has been now increased to three teaspoons. I do not propose to go beyond this, unless you consider that it is necessary to increase the quantity. Milk stands at 30 ounces. I am now weighing the *bhakkharis* I take, and the quantity I take weighs three ounces in a cooked condition. In view of the tendency of the system towards an increase in blood-pressure on the slightest provocation, do you want me to start *bhujangasana*? So far as physical strength is concerned, there is no difficulty about undertaking any of these practices. And personally I am unable to understand why some of these *asanas* should increase the blood-pressure, although they do not apparently affect the system otherwise. I suppose they do not increase blood-pressure in men enjoying normal health. It would be well if you could say which *asanas* are positively harmless, so far as blood-pressure is concerned.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5050

71. LETTER TO ALVI

June 29, 1927

I have your straightforward letter.¹ Of course, you have addressed it to the Editor but I shall not reply to it in *Navajivan* because the question you have raised is not likely to occur to many. I suspect from your letter that your study of the *Gita* is not deep enough. There is no difference between *nishkama karma*² and *tatastha karma*³. You take it for granted that a benevolent act is an unattached one. *But non-attachment and benevolence are two distinct qualities.* In this world one sees attachment in benevolence everywhere and hence numberless sins have been, are being and will be committed in the name of benevolence. The reason why the *Gita* is dear to me is that the divine author has seen this

¹ In which the correspondent had asked why Gandhiji had described his action in donating Badri's money for the cause of vegetarianism as neither unattached nor impartial.

² Desireless work.

³ Work done without attachment.

distinction through experience and has in the course of his work endeavoured to explain it minutely and repeatedly in varying words and also in identical terms. It was certainly no selfish act on my part to have helped the vegetarian movement, but despite this fact I looked upon it as my own rather than God's; and where personal attachment develops there is no impartiality and no detachment. Today I clearly see my attachment and desire in having been emboldened to deploy my client's money for that work because I regarded that work as my own. Khadi work certainly is benevolent. Suppose I have some money belonging to you and of course I intend to return it to you. I may even be able to return it forthwith. Now if I am carrying on khadi work without personal attachment, I would never use your money. It should be my dharma to carry on the business of khadi only with the money specifically received for it. And as long as that work can be carried on without attachment and desire, I would not make use of any other money. Now you must have seen how in that case I lost my impartiality. Had I used my own money, there would have been no difficulty. Staying impartial does not mean withholding help. Where one feels one should help and if one has the capacity, one should certainly do so; one should not however press into service another's resources without his permission. And even in seeking such permission one ought to be discreet. I had the late Bhai Badri's permission though I do not regard it as such. He was not capable of thinking independently and giving his opinion. He had given his consent merely because of his faith in me. And that too in the distinct belief that I would never allow his money to be misused. Under such circumstances it was my dharma not to risk his money to the slightest extent. If you do not understand me after all this, do ask me for further clarification.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

72. LETTER TO JAGMOHAN DAHYABHAI

June 29, 1927

A healthy mother's milk contains all the elements that a child needs. Mother's milk is a complete food for the child. Hence there is absolutely no need to give it fruit juices. Sometimes we see such need because the mother is subject to passions and yields to temptations of the palate or may be she has a disease and therefore her milk is not quite wholesome and nourishing. I can therefore offer you only this advice: if the child keeps healthy and if you see his strength growing day by day, you need give it nothing besides milk but if you find it whining or growing thin or if mother's milk is not enough in quantity, you can certainly give it small quantities of orange or grape juice.

The sentence I have quoted from my book does not hold in the case of a child of two or three months. But when a child begins to sit, can exert itself sufficiently and when its gums have become strong, it should get used to green fruits in case it needs more than mother's milk. In short, we should first let it have milk and then start on fruits.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

73. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

[After June 29, 1927]¹

I would advise you and Devchandbhai not to insist on running the administration of the Conference. And if both of you are interested in any other work in addition to the work of khadi, the *Antyajas*, national education, etc., or any other equally constructive activity, and if you are competent to take it up, do retain charge of the administration and do whatever is right. Speaking for myself, I have no interest at present in political activities apart from cow-protection and so on, nor do I find myself up to it. I therefore simply watch it from a distance. If someone says something about politics I discuss it a little with him. When I cannot

¹ The source has this letter after the entries for June 29, 1927.

avoid writing about it I scribble off something. In other respects I remain completely untouched.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

74. *OUR SHAME*

Sjt. S. D. Nadkarni is a clear writer, and has a very large heart for the so-called untouchables. I publish in another column, without any alteration, a letter¹ from him, in which he has poured out his feeling for the suppressed classes. And he has rightly used me as a peg, on which to hang his indictment of the touchables. Leaving aside, however, myself out of account, it seems to me that his deep feeling has overpowered the sense of logic which as a rule does not fail him. I venture to think, that terrible as the case for untouchables is, it had no place either in the discussions of the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay, or at the Unity Conference at Delhi, when only the question of Hindu-Muslim unity alone was on the anvil. It would have been just as logical to discuss at these meetings the question, say, of the woes of child widows, terrible as these are, as it would have been to handle the question of untouchability. But the slight illogicality of the letter must not be allowed to blur the very important question so forcibly presented by Sjt. Nadkarni. I entirely agree with him, that if there is no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity; much less is there swaraj without the removal of the shame of Hinduism, which untouchability certainly is. I am unconcerned with the question, what place untouchables will have in any political constitution that may be drawn up. Every one of the artificial props, that may be set up in the constitution, will be broken to bits, if we Hindus do not wish to play the game. The reasoning I have given against separate electorates and against separate treatment in the constitution is equally applicable in the case of untouchables. This removal of untouchability is not to be brought about by any legal enactment. It will only be brought about, when the Hindu conscience is roused to action, and of its own accord *removes* the shame. It is a duty the touchables owe to the untouchables.

¹ Dated May 28, 1927

Let them not wait till the Suppressed Class Leagues and Touchable-Untouchable riots open their eyes to the needs of the most needy among us Indians.

This is a terrible sentence occurring in the concluding portion of the letter. It is impossible to deny the force behind it. It reminds me of the conversation that took place between the late Hari Narayan Apte and myself just before Gokhale died. It was at the Servants of India Society's quarters in Poona, that I was pleading for work amongst the so-called higher classes, rather than agitating amongst the suppressed classes after the fashion of some missionaries, and creating unrest among them. I was new to the work. I had not drunk deep of the ocean of miseries, in which the suppressed classes were being drowned, as the late Hari Narayan Apte had. In my philosophical prudence I asked this reformer, burning with the shame of the wrongs heaped upon the suppressed classes by the suppressing classes, whether he would incite suppressed classes against us. Instantly and indignantly came the reply:

Certainly, if I could, I would make them rebel against us today, and wrest from us by force what we will not give them voluntarily and as a matter of duty.

Much progress has been achieved in the matter of this reform. But infinitely more remains to be done. Most reforms have been preceded by bloodshed. There seems to arrive a point, at which patience of the downtrodden is exhausted, and taking the law into their own hands and maddened with grief and rage they make short work of the tyrant, and in their turn repeat, on an opportunity occurring, all the mistakes of the tyrant. Though, therefore, I share now to the fullest extent, I hope, the indignation that filled Hari Narayan Apte, I must work in the hope that the so-called higher class Hindus will, whilst there is yet time, retrace their steps, and render to the suppressed classes the justice which has become long overdue, and in the further hope that, should the former not repent, the suppressed classes will know better than to rise in revolt against the wrongdoers. I must continue to work in the hope that they will vindicate themselves and their Hinduism by going through a process of conscious suffering and self-purification, and thus proving themselves superior Hindus to those who are today disgracing themselves and Hinduism before man and God. Every individual Hindu, who feels as Sjt. Nadkarni does for the untouchables, can meanwhile make common

cause with them by himself or herself becoming untouchable by sharing their sorrows and their trials.

Young India, 30-6-1927

75. CHITTARANJAN SEVA SADAN

Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, the celebrated physician of Calcutta and one of the trustees of the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Trust, has issued an appeal for five lakhs of rupees for the Seva Sadan. It will be remembered that this institution is situated on the ground which Deshbandhu in his lifetime had made over to the trustees. The ground was partly encumbered. It was redeemed out of the memorial funds that were collected immediately after Deshbandhu's death, and for over a year, a well-equipped and well-managed hospital and a dispensary have been going on there. The total number of the cases treated at the outdoor during the year was 22,000, new cases being 7,023. The total number of in-door patients was 579 with only 23 beds. The trustees now propose to add 32 beds. There can be no doubt that the institution supplies a felt want, and that it needs expansion. Expansion means more money. Those, who revere the memory of Deshbandhu, and who appreciate the necessity of rendering aid to the ailing, will not lose time in responding to the appeal issued on behalf of the Board of Trustees. A full report of the institution, containing a certified account of income and expenditure, and an analysis of cases treated at the institution, accompanies the report, which can be had from Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, 148, Russa Road South, Calcutta. Subscriptions can be sent to the Secretary, Deshbandhu Memorial Trust, 36, Wellington Street, Calcutta, or to the account of Deshbandhu Memorial Trust, Central Bank of India, Limited, 100, Clive Street, Calcutta.

Young India, 30-6-1927

76. BANGALORE KHADI EXHIBITION

Sjts. C. Rajagopalachari and Gangadharrao Deshpande are making great preparations to make the forthcoming Khadi Exhibition at Bangalore a thorough success. They are aiming not at quantity but quality, and so they have purposely restricted the scope. It is to be therefore not an all-India, but a South India Exhibition. But they are inviting from all the provinces the assistance that may be necessary in order to complete the technical demonstration, and in order to make the Exhibition an instructive object-lesson. Those, therefore, who would learn all about the technique of khadi from hand-ginning to hand-weaving, and study the instruments used in the processes and to see them at work by skilled hands, will not fail to attend the Exhibition. It is a happy augury for the future of khadi in Mysore that the State has given a donation of Rs. 500/- towards the expenses of the Exhibition, and that the Director of Industries has become a member of the Exhibition Committee. Indeed the economic and the philanthropic side of khadi is so overwhelmingly important that it is a wonder that Rajas and Maharajas have not given the movement the support that it deserves. Everybody agrees that millions of villagers require a supplementary occupation. Scores of paper schemes are being hawked about the country for achieving village reconstruction. But not one scheme has the universal application that khadi has. And so far as I am aware, not one scheme is being tried on the scale that khadi is being tried. It is not a small achievement to be able to show that the khadi scheme is at work in at least 1,500 villages.

That khadi has a political side to it need not frighten a single person, even though he may be an official. Indeed many learned politicians laugh at khadi, when any political consequence is ascribed to it; and they would be right if the word 'political' was used in connection with khadi in the same sense that it is used in connection with Councils. Khadi has a political consequence precisely in the same sense that education has, co-operative schemes have, temperance reform has. It is impossible to avoid the political effect of any progressive measure that a nation may adopt. The Viceroy, and the Rajas, Maharajas and everybody must, if they are not traitors to the country, take an active part in promoting Hindu-Muslim unity, and yet nobody has ventured

to laugh at the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity having a tremendous political consequence; nor have I known anybody keeping himself aloof from the movement for promoting that unity on the ground that it has a tremendous political consequence. Indeed the full success of khadi and therewith its political effect depend upon the support of all, politicians and non-politicians, the prince and the pauper, the zamindar and the ryot. Every attempt is therefore being made to keep khadi above political turmoil. It is not an emblem of revolt; but it is an emblem of self-assertion, self-reliance and determination to abolish artificial distinctions between rich and poor, between capital and labour, and establish a living bond between the two. I am hoping, therefore, that the forthcoming Exhibition will receive the solid support of all classes of people, including the numerous European settlements in the cantonment of Bangalore. That large population will be equally welcome with the rest. Indeed in my talks with the European friends, who have kindly visited me during my convalescence at Nandi and at Bangalore, I have not hesitated to present the message of khadi, that is the message of India's starving millions, for their acceptance.

One word to the fashionable people of Bangalore. I observe a teacher of Trichinopoly has been pleading for the adoption of a minimum in sartorial matters. I observed, also, that Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri the other day at a public meeting remarked upon what might almost be called the over-dress of the fashionable people of Bangalore. And I have noticed on the part of those who believe in khadi a timid hesitation to adopt it in the face of the Bangalore fashion. I plead for the necessary courage to set aside fashion, which can only be sustained at the expense of our starving neighbours. By all means let monied people have tasteful ornamentation, whether in dress or in other surroundings; but I do plead for an observance, as between themselves and their starving brethren, of a due sense of proportion, such as is always observed in well ordered society. India's minimum is a *lan-goti* requiring less than 1/6th of a square yard. Let our fashion have some correspondence to this minimum. Let not those, who would raise this minimum, and multiply India's wants in order to wake her up to action, think that they would achieve the end by first multiplying their own wants at the expense of the poor, and without in the same proportion enabling and inducing the latter to raise their standard of living. One universal and effective and immediate way to enable and induce these millions to raise their standard of living is for the fashionable middle class to adopt khadi, and thereby put a few coppers into their pockets. Many in Banga-

lore have given pecuniary contributions to khadi work. But this is not enough. Khadi cannot make real progress, unless there are people to wear it. I therefore ask the people of Bangalore and neighbouring districts not merely to visit the Exhibition, and give the movement pecuniary support, but also to identify themselves with the poor by adopting khadi for their dress.

Young India, 30-6-1927

77. NOTES

IN JUSTICE TO HER MEMORY

*The Modern Review*¹ has a paragraph on what occurs in *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Chapter 19, Part III,² on Sister Nivedita. After quoting my remarks, *The Modern Review* has:

The mention of "the splendour that surrounded her" without any other details conveys a wrong idea of Sister Nivedita's mode of living. The fact is, at the time when Mr. Gandhi saw her, she was the guest of Mrs. Ole Bull and Miss Josephine MacLeod at the American Consulate, and, as such, was not responsible for the "splendour". Her ascetic and very simple style of living in a tumbledown house in Bossepara Lane, Baghbazar, is well known to all her friends and acquaintances.

We do not know whether Mr. Gokhale spoke to Mr. Gandhi in English and actually used the word "volatile" to describe her; for what has appeared in *Young India* is translated from the Gujarati *Navajivan*. But whoever may be responsible for the use of the word 'volatile' has wronged her memory. Sister Nivedita had her defects, as in fact even the greatest of mankind had and have, but volatile she was not in any sense of that word. As English is not our vernacular, we have consulted two dictionaries on our table to find out its exact meaning as applied to human beings. The Pocket Oxford Dictionary defines it to mean "of gay temperament, mercurial". In Webster's New International Dictionary the explanation given is, "light-hearted; airy; lively; hence, changeable; fickle". Sister Nivedita was a very serious-minded person, noted for her constancy and steadfast devotion to the cause of Hinduism and India.

The reference to "her overflowing love for Hinduism" is quite just and accurate.

¹ Of July, 1927

² Published in *Young India*, April 14, 1927

I gladly reproduce this correction. For I never knew the fact, till I saw the note in *The Modern Review* that I had met the deceased not at her own place but at a guest's. The reader has to recognize my painful limitations. My reading is so poor that I have not read, much though I should like to have, the lives even of those who have contributed to the making of modern India. My only consolation is that the poverty of my reading is not due to any laziness on my part, but a life of ceaseless action and full of tempest from early youth left no time for much reading. Whether on the whole I have lost or gained thereby is to me a debatable question. But if it is a gain, it has been achieved in spite of myself. I can therefore claim no credit for it. And if in the story that I am writing from week to week,¹ I deal with men and women, I do so only in so far as such reference is necessary for showing the working of my mind, so far as I can, in my search for Truth. I am therefore leaving out innumerable instances in life, which would be certainly otherwise interesting, as also references to several men and women. And it will be unjust to those whom I am obliged to refer in the story and to me, if the reader concludes that the estimate that I may give about persons is my final statement or true in fact. Such references should be regarded merely as the impression left upon my mind at the time to which they may relate. I introduced Sister Nivedita, Swami Vivekananda, Maharshi Devendranath and others in the story simply to illustrate my desperate search, and to illustrate the point, that even then my political work in South Africa was an integral part of that search, which was never once subordinated to the political work. It has therefore given me pleasure to reproduce the paragraph in *The Modern Review* at the very first opportunity after reading it.

As to the use of the word "volatile", though the translation is not mine, I cannot dissociate myself from its use, because as a rule I revise these translations, and I remember having discussed the adjective with Mahadev Desai. We both had doubts about the use of the adjective being correct. The choice lay between volatile, violent and fanatical. The last two were considered to be too strong. Mahadev had chosen volatile and I passed it. But neither he nor I had the dictionary meaning in view.

¹ The reference is to Gandhiji's autobiography, chapters of which were being published in *Navajivan* from November 29, 1925 and in *Young India* from December 3, 1925.

What word Gokhale used I cannot recall. The word used in the original writing is *tej*. I have a full recollection of the conversation between Sister Nivedita and myself. But I do not propose to describe it. No fault in the translation or the original can possibly damage the memory of one who loved Hinduism and India so well. It will ever be cherished with gratefulness.

Young India, 30-6-1927

78. KASHI VIDYAPITH

The readers of *Young India* know that the Kashi Vidyapith is one of the very few national institutions still alive. I have much pleasure in publishing the following¹ sent to me by the Registrar of the Kashi Vidyapith.

Young India, 30-6-1927

79. MESSAGE TO "FORWARD"²

June 30, 1927

If we would be worthy of swaraj and of the sacrifice of Deshbandhu, we must show some tangible work of construction in terms of the nation. Khadi holds the field till something better and equally universal can displace it. And if khadi and the spinning-wheel be considered beneath dignity and notice, we stand in danger of being considered beneath notice by the Mother.

The Hindu, 1-7-1927

¹ Not reproduced here; it gave the date of reopening of the Vidyalaya, subjects taught, minimum qualifications for admission, etc.

² For its "Deshbandhu Number"

80. LETTER TO P. R. SUBRAMANIA SASTRI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 30, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Sjt. Rajagopalachariar has shown me your letter of the 29th instant. I am not yet fit enough to meet people for holding sustained discourse. Whilst therefore if you desire to come, you will be welcome any day between 4 and 5 p.m. I shall not be able to engage in any long conversation with you. If you have anything original to say, I would suggest your writing it as briefly as possible on one side of an ordinary note paper and sending it to me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. R. SUBRAMANIA SASTRI
55, MALLESWARAM
BANGALORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14177

81. LETTER TO T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIAR¹

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 1, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

It is a most dangerous thing to expect me to send replies by return post. It is by mere accident that I am able to deal with your letter immediately on receipt.

I do hope that you will be able to make further progress with the resolutions you refer to, namely, remarriage of virgin widows and post-puberty marriage. These two, I consider, to be elementary reforms and they are the least that Hindus owe to Hinduism and India and their womenfolk.

¹ This was sent as a message to the Arya Vaisya Conference which began at Salem on July 2.

I hope your conference will not forget the suppressed classes and the spinning-wheel.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIAR
XIII ARYA VAISYA CONFERENCE
SALEM

From a microfilm: S.N. 14179

82. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 1, 1927

I hope you got my letter. This is only to send you Andrews' cable¹. I know that you are six inches taller, if such a thing may be said of a mere woman, for the triumph of the principle for which you stood up so bravely in South Africa. You have every reason to be proud.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12363

83. LETTER TO HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 1, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shall look forward to the end of June 1928.

As you have not told me anything about the lady you have in view, I can only give you general information. The Ashram is, you might almost say, a workshop. Men and women are engaged in doing some work or other, all activities centred round ginning, carding, spinning and weaving, and both men and women, boys and girls take their due share in these activities. There is, no doubt, literary training in a proper school conducted in the Ashram. But

¹ Dated June 25; it read: "Malan faithfully loyal towards settlement, rejected hostile amendments. Thank God worst strain over. Tell Sarojini."

vocational training is not sacrificed to literary training. One might almost therefore fancy that literary training is subordinated to the vocational. English is taught, it might almost be said, under compulsion. We don't encourage the teaching of English there, and the rule of first exacting a knowledge of Sanskrit and Hindi before going to English is more or less adhered to. If, therefore, this lady does not know Hindi, or wants to do everything through English, or is fond merely of literary pursuits, at the Ashram, she would be like fish out of water. Now if you want to know the details about the Ashram, you will please tell me and I shall pass on your letter to the proper quarters for reply.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12775

84. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVEL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 1, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. Isn't it funny that in spite of both of them being long, I find nothing there touching the direct question that I have put? Surely, it is the easiest thing possible for you to tell me what is Belgium doing, what is Switzerland doing? What are you *doing* as distinguished from writing?

I add another question. I have nearly 80 acres of ground on which we are nearly 200 souls, men and women and children, and therefore parents with their children. We are doing a little bit of agriculture and we are doing dairy work, etc. Tell me what we should do to fall under your scheme.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14178

85. LETTER TO B. F. BHARUCHA¹

[Before July 2, 1927]²

What will you see by going to Nagpur? It is not necessary for me to explain to you that a satyagrahi cannot break the Arms Act. From the outset, the meaning of civil disobedience has been violation of such laws as are opposed to *niti* (ethics), so that there can be violation of *jakati* laws (tariff or taxation laws). There cannot be violation of laws that forbid thefts. Similarly, the man who carries on a peaceful campaign cannot carry a sword or a rifle with the object of being arrested or with any other purpose. At Lucknow, where Maulana Mahomed Ali and I were going round, we found volunteers with naked swords and we made them give up their swords. At Bezwada Maulana Mahomed Ali and I made volunteers give up their big sticks, though no permit or licence was necessary to carry them.

The man who is out to die or to give up his life, how can he hold a sword? Anything may happen after altering the aspect of the campaign, giving up the name of satyagraha or withdrawing the epithet *shanti*. But under cover of words such as *shanti*, satyagraha, etc., how could there be promulgation of *ashanti* or *asatya*? Ere this, I had seen your support to the Nagpur campaign and even then I felt pained. But it is hardly possible to correct even our friends immediately they err. I have written even this much because of your reference in your letter that you were proceeding to Nagpur to see what was going on there.

The Hindu, 4-7-1927

¹ This is part of a Gujarati letter the original of which is not available. *Vide* "Limitations of Satyagraha", 14-7-1927.

² This letter was read by the addressee at an emergent meeting of Nagpur Nagar Congress Committee held on July 2,

86. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF SOUTH INDIA

[July 2, 1927]¹

In a letter addressed to the men and women of South India, Mahatma Gandhi says:

It has been a matter of deep grief to me that owing to the collapse of my health, I was unable to enter upon the tour in South India on the appointed date. God willing, I hope to commence the tour some time in July though the original programme will have to be considerably modified and reduced. Meanwhile, however, I hope that those who have not yet taken to khadi will do so for the sake of the starving millions; for, whoever buys one yard of khadi puts the whole of the cost of it into the pockets of the poor people of this famine-stricken land, more than half of it going directly into the pockets of those to whom every pie means so much more money to buy the necessities of life.

The Hindu, 2-7-1927

87. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU²

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 2, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

So I can't have you in Bangalore, it appears. It will be cruel to have you follow me somewhere down South to melt there. But if you come even about the end of this month, I might be at some pleasant place in Mysore, because the whole of Mysore is Nature's favoured spot in India's plains.

About the time that Sarojini Devi wrote to you, she wrote to me also, and sent a peremptory telegram asking me to sup-

¹ Released on this date by the Associated Press of India from Bangalore

² In reply to his letter dated June 25. Motilal Nehru had written: "Your letter arrived just after I had posted my reply to Sarojini who was instigated by Jinnah and the Maharaja of Mahmudabad to offer the Crown to me in supersession of both Ansari and Jawahar."

port her request, and even to "issue orders". But I knew beforehand what you would say to the proposal kindly meant, but thoughtlessly made. I wrote to her almost in the same strain as you, and suggested that Dr. Ansari was the only possible president. I told her also that I did not at all believe that his occupancy of the presidential chair would in any way diminish the weight of any settlement arrived at by the Congress. In my opinion, if Dr. Ansari is chosen, a reasonable settlement has a better chance of being adopted by the Congress.

You did tell me about the appearance of *Tara*¹. What with *Chand*² and *Tara*, there must be perpetual illumination in the house; and the appearance of *Suraj*³ to support Chand and Tara is, let us hope, a question merely of time. I shall readily forgive Sarup for never thinking of writing to me if she brings up her Suns and Moons and Stars for the service of the Motherland. I hope both the mother and the baby are making steady progress.

I make my first appearance tomorrow to open a Khadi Exhibition which has been arranged in Bangalore in order to keep my chief warders Gangadharrao and Rajagopalachari occupied. They are doing a brisk trade in khadi and are not ashamed to exploit their prisoner's illness.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12598

88. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BANGALORE,

*Ashadh Shuddha 3 [July 2, 1927]*⁴

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. You have done well in going to the Ashram. Take good care of your health. Health permitting, help if you can in the work of the store which the women have taken upon themselves. My health is steadily improving. There is still room for improvement in your handwriting. It will improve if you write carefully and slowly for some time. Speed will come by and by. It is the same with this as with spinning. It is diffi-

¹ Second daughter of Sarup (Vijayalakshmi Pandit); literally, 'star'

² First daughter of Sarup; literally, 'moon'

³ Literally, 'sun'

⁴ Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927.

cult to ensure strength in the yarn after first learning to spin fast; on the contrary, speed will increase of itself after one has learnt to spin strong yarn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 587. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

89. LETTER TO SANTOJI MAHARAJ

BANGALORE,
Aso Sud 3 [July 2, 1927]

SHRI SANTOJI MAHARAJ,

I have carefully preserved your questions, and with God's grace I shall try to answer them now. I enclose the questions with this answer so that you may not have to take the trouble of recalling them and I may not have to copy them. I have numbered them serially, and there should be, therefore, no confusion.

1. Only he can interpret the *Gita* correctly who tries to follow its teaching in practice, and the correctness of the interpretation will be in proportion to his success in living according to the teaching. The *Gita* was not composed as a learned treatise. It may be a profound one, but in my view the realization of its profound quality depends on the depth of one's sincerity in putting its teaching into practice. I have read Lokamanya Tilak's and Shankaracharya's commentaries and tried to understand them as well as I could. I am not qualified to pronounce judgment on their learning. If we accept the point of view I have suggested, the question of expressing an opinion on their learning does not arise. The *Gita* is related to the Vedas and the Upanishads, for it gives the essence of both.

2. The *Gita* teaches that one should cultivate the state of *samata*¹ and explains with every manner of argument the means of doing so, namely, *bhakti*² accompanied with *jnana*³, that is, service of every living creature without thought of reward.

3. The godly heritage, according to the *Gita*, is that which helps one to attain self-realization. The sign of having acquired such heritage is the weakening of one's attachments and aversions, and

¹ Equanimity in all circumstances and equality towards all things

² Devotion

³ Knowledge

the means of acquiring it is cultivation of *bhakti* for the Lord.

4. As far as I have been able to read and understand the teachings of our sacred writers of past times, I don't think there is any difference of view.

5. A Brahmin and a Bhangi¹ [let us suppose] are stung by a scorpion. I see that a *vaid* has arrived to help the former, and another has been sent for. The *vaid* simply does not look towards the Bhangi who has been crying for help. Both the *vaid* and the Brahmin hear his cries. If the Brahmin has learnt to regard all beings with an equal eye, he would ask the *vaid* to treat the Bhangi first. If I were the *vaid*, I would run to the Bhangi, suck out the poison from the wound and apply to him whatever other remedies I knew. Having done that, I would offer my service to the Brahmin, if he required it, and then attend to my other work. To cultivate an equal eye towards all beings means to serve all people in the world with equal regard.

6. It is not true at all that the Lord teaches in the *Gita* that one may kill one's kinsmen. When Arjuna got ready to fight for what he believed to be a just cause, and was overcome with ignorant attachment and weakness, through which he made a distinction between kinsmen and others, the Lord cured him of his attachment and weakness. We can only guess what reply Krishna would have given if Arjuna had protested and said that he did not wish to kill at all, whether his opponents were kinsmen or others. It is my humble view, however, that the *Gita* was not composed to give a direct answer to that question.

7. I have felt that there is a greater spirit of universality and liberalism in the *sanatana* Vedic dharma².

8. The question, which is the chief religious work, one can answer only for oneself. For me it is the *Gita*. One distinction at any rate among such works is based on the subject they deal with, namely, those which lay down codes of conduct and others which state and explain the nature of Godhead. If the question refers to anything more than this, I have not understood it.

9. The differences between the rules of conduct enjoined by the various religions will change from age to age, and as knowledge and the spirit of liberalism grow such differences will diminish.

10. I think this question is involved in question 9. But I shall

¹ Member of a caste traditionally associated with scavenging work

² The dharma based on the Vedic tradition

say this by way of further explanation. We should believe that the practices and modes of conduct which we find represented in the Koran, the Bible, the Vedas and other works were the best in those times and those lands. If our reason cannot accept them in this age, it is our dharma to change them or abandon them altogether. Only fundamental principles are immutable.

11. In acting towards other people and understanding their faiths one should follow the principle of regarding others as oneself.

12. I think it almost impossible to decide which out of the many interpretations of religious works represents undiluted truth. That is why the *Gita* has convincingly argued that *samanyaya*¹ is the best. God alone represents perfect truth. Imperfect man, therefore, should humbly believe that as one's truth is dear to one, so others' truths are bound to be dear to them. Hence everyone should follow his own path and others should not hinder him from doing so. People will then follow, of their own accord, that path which is found from experience to be the smoothest.

13. Till we come across a person of experience and of perfect purity in conduct, we should observe the rules of conduct and discipline enjoined in the religious work which we have accepted as our scripture, read it regularly, reflect over it and put its teachings into practice. Those who cannot do even this are ignorant people. Such of them as cannot observe purity in conduct have a protector only in God. I believe in the assurance given in the *Gita* that even people of this class are saved somehow. Words certainly have a meaning, but there are ebbs and floods in the meaning of words as if they had a life of their own.

14. As I understand the problem, without a belief in reincarnation it would be almost impossible to prove that the world is governed by justice. Moreover, one soul cannot have [full] experience of the world within the span of one life, which is but a moment in a vast cycle of time. I can practically say that I have direct proof every moment of the truth of the belief in reincarnation.

15. Virtue and sin exist in the same sense that light and darkness, happiness and suffering, truth and untruth, do. However, just as there is an unknowable and indescribable Reality beyond the categories of existence and non-existence, so also there is something beyond virtue and sin of which this body can have

¹ Synthesis

no experience. The descriptions given in Buddhist writings or in those of the Nyaya and the Sankhya schools of philosophy are not unalterable, but these too, can be understood and accepted from the respective viewpoints.

16. For the development of man's reasoning faculty, the right influences are certainly essential. To put it scientifically, every society solves the problem in every age for itself.

17. Violence means injuring a creature through bodily action or speech or in thought, with the intention of injuring it. Non-violence means not injuring any creature in this manner. The doctrine of non-violence propounded in Vedanta literature, as far as I have understood it, seems to me all right. But I cannot say myself whether I have understood the Vedanta teaching correctly, nor can I claim that my study of the Vedanta is deep.

18. For being able to observe *brahmacharya*, one must keep the mind, speech and body constantly engaged in morally pure activity. We can, therefore, say in a general way that a *brahmachari* should do the opposite of what householders given to the enjoyment of pleasures do. It is my experience that desires in the mind are closely connected with the kind of food one eats, but I know that such desires arise even when one's food is pure and small in quantity. We may, therefore, say that right food is a great help for the observance of *brahmacharya*, but that it is not all. The purest food is fruit, which has naturally ripened, eaten in solitude. I have no doubt about this at all. The chief thing is that, if the palate could be controlled, the observance of *brahmacharya* would become quite easy. We commit two errors in saying that knowledge has reference to the mind and food is connected with the body, which is a material object. The body of a living human being is not altogether inert. And the thing which we call mind and which learns from experience is as closely connected with the body as light is with the sun. A dead body is one from which the mind has gone; such a body does not eat or drink. Thus, it is the mind which eats through the body, and likewise it is through the body that really speaking it acquires knowledge.

19. The universal Soul in which all the souls exist is God. The living creature which does not know that universal Soul and looks upon itself as separate from other creatures is what we call *jiva*¹. That universal Soul, though dwelling in all, is not directly expe-

¹ Individual soul

rienced; that is its beauty, its miracle, its *maya*¹. The true end of human effort consists in crossing that *maya* and knowing that universal Soul, which is the one source of all. It is not a thing which can be experienced in a manner our reason can understand; how, then, can there be any means of experiencing it? But anyone who has the strength to forget the "I" in him and make himself a cipher can have a glimpse of this universal Soul, though he cannot help someone else to have it too. Such a person is so dazzled by the mere glimpse, and so utterly spell-bound, that he merges in it. He feels no desire and no need to describe his supreme bliss to anyone.

20. I have somehow found something for myself by combining all the suggestions made by the authors of Shastras. It is, therefore, quite difficult for me to say which path is acceptable. Shankara is dear to me, and so are Ramanuja, Madhva, Vallabha and others—I have relished delicacies from all, but have not been able to satisfy my hunger through what I got from any of them.

21. It may now be seen that the reply to this question is contained in the replies to the preceding questions. *Yajna*², *dana*³, *tapas*⁴, are obligatory duties, but that does not mean that the manner of performing them in this age should be the same as in ancient times. *Yajna*, *dana*, etc., are permanent principles. The social practices and the concrete forms through which they are put into practice may change from age to age and country to country. In my view, for example, the supreme *yajna* for this country and in this age is the spinning-wheel. The right gift which a seeker of *moksha* in this country and this age may make is to dedicate his all, body, intellect and possessions, to the service of the country. And, likewise, the right *tapas* for this country and this age consists in burning with agony at the suffering of countless untouchables and others who are starving for want of food or because of famines. Anyone who performs these three important duties certainly becomes purified and he may even have a vision of God's cosmic form which Arjuna had.⁵

22. *Saguna*⁶, *nirguna*⁷, etc., belong to the speech of human be-

¹ Mystery

² Sacrifice

³ Gift-giving, charity

⁴ Austerity

⁵ Vide the *Bhagavad Gita*, XI

⁶ With attributes

⁷ Without attributes

ings trying to express their imperfect knowledge which is sheer ignorance. In truth God is beyond description. Even to call Him *nirguna* is an utterly vain attempt to describe Him. Since, however, He is a slave of His devotees, He can be described not with a thousand but with an infinite number of epithets, all of which can be applied to him from the point of view of the respective devotees, and it is His supreme mercy that He tolerates them all. There is no error, therefore, in saying that He exists as all bodies, all sense-organs and all other things. We may thus confess our inability to describe Him.

23. I wish to say in all humility that my fasts and other ordeals are inspired by the desire to see God face to face. I fast in order that, even if I go without food altogether, I may have a glimpse of God such as I have described in these answers. But one cannot force oneself to undertake a fast. One must have fitness even for a fast. I am constantly striving for such fitness. But it is possible that I may not acquire it in this life and may even die ingloriously.

This completes the list of your questions. If you have any other questions to ask besides these, do ask them. You will notice a certain positiveness in some or all of the answers. Please do not put it down to presumption or pride. If I did not write what I have done, I would be guilty of untruth, for it would mean concealing my real beliefs through false humility. If, therefore, you see impropriety in my positiveness, kindly forgive me for that.

The revered Malaviyaji Maharaj is here. I have discussions with him on all manner of religious issues. I will tell him of your desire too.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12323

90. HONOURABLE LABOUR

Cotton is produced in Viramgam, Lakhtar and other areas and, though the steam-engine has been introduced in these areas, it has not been possible to dispense with the human machine and therefore, extracting cotton from the pods and similar work is being done by men and women. This is work which cannot be done by one person, it must be taken up by a large number. If, therefore, the Machine Age comes to stay, machines for extracting cotton are bound to be introduced in these areas. At present,

however, the work of extracting cotton from the pods is fortunately or unfortunately—according to one's point of view—done by men and women. I, therefore, put a few questions to a friend who does this work. He says in reply.¹

If, fifty or sixty years ago, any person like me had put similar questions about spinning, he would have received literally the same reply as this; for at that time the spinning-wheel was a sign not of poverty but of culture and respectability, and the rich used to spin willingly as a matter of duty, just as they do now the work of extracting cotton from the pods and do not mind accepting money for it, though such work is a means of livelihood for the poor. As long as the rich had not given up spinning, the poor were safe and spinning did not disappear as an occupation. Such universal occupations are a duty as much as they are occupations, and they last only so long as the rich keep them up, for they offer no opportunities for making millions or for speculation. They remain alive only if the rich have regard for the welfare of society as a whole. When social concern ceases to be a motive, everyone strives to be a millionaire and looks for an occupation which may help him to be one. The *varnashrama*² dharma was conceived and accepted as part of Hinduism so that people may not yield to such wicked temptations which degrade them spiritually. This dharma now survives only in name and its real nature is forgotten. Everywhere we see only its distortions. A dharma which was conceived as a means of regulating occupations is now confined to restrictive practices about eating and marrying. How can I persuade people that in the revival of the spinning-wheel lies the revival of *varnashrama*, of pure dharma and, if I may say without being guilty of exaggeration, of dharma in its entirety?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-7-1927

¹ Not translated here. The correspondent had explained that the work was regarded as honourable and was done by everyone, rich and poor.

² The division of society into four *varnas* or castes and of the individual's life into four *ashramas* or stages

91. THE DILEMMA OF A STUDENT

A simple-hearted student writes:

I have read your letter advising me to become a khadi-worker, with the greatest attention. I do want to take up some work which will enable me to serve the country. But I have yet to decide whether I should be a khadi-worker or take up another form of service. I have not yet felt that khadi work can be a means for inner progress. For the present, I spin just to do my duty to society, knowing as I do that spinning is necessary both for our economic amelioration and for the attainment of freedom. Eventually, of course, I will choose the work which satisfies me the most. For the moment, however, my aim is to acquire as much knowledge as possible and to prepare myself for service.

As for *brahmacharya*, what can I write about it? I can only pray to God to give me the strength to fulfil my desire to observe the vow of *brahmacharya*.

I do not understand why you give equal importance both to the acquisition of knowledge and craft-work in schools. I have felt that in trying to do both things at the same time we fail to do either of them well.

We do have to learn some craft. But would it not be better if it were taught after the intellectual part of our training is over? Spinning I do not regard as craft-work, but as a duty one owes to society. Everyone must therefore spin. But I feel that weaving, agriculture and carpentry may well be postponed till after the academic studies are over. Each of them is an independent subject of study complete in itself, and it would be enough if a year or more is allotted to it separately.

The way things are being attempted here harms both intellectual development and proficiency in craft-work. To do craft-work for three hours, to spin in spare time, and to study all those subjects which are taught in other schools, to do one's own reading, and then to take part with others in the necessary community chores—all this is indeed very difficult to do.

The amount of reading laid down for the boys cannot be lessened. It is necessary for them to learn all the subjects. How are we justified then in burdening the boys with extra work when they have to learn so many subjects besides doing their own reading? If they do not get enough time to fulfil even the assignments set to them, how can they be expected to do their own personal reading and thinking? I find that

as teaching advances, it becomes ever more necessary to do extra-curricular reading and there is no time for it.

I have spoken of these difficulties to the teachers. There have also been discussions about it, but I am not satisfied. I think they have not sufficient appreciation of our difficulties. Will you please give the points I have raised some consideration and explain to me where I err?

There are two important points raised in this letter. The reader need not be told that it is a reply to my letter. I thought that instead of sending a private reply to the correspondent I had better discuss it in the *Navajivan* so that it may be of use to other students who have similar difficulties. I had therefore kept it pending these three months.

The distinction made here in inner progress and the service of society is also made by many others in India. I consider this distinction as due to an error of thought. I believe, and it is also my experience, that all that is against the progress of the soul is also against the true interest of society in general. The progress of the soul can best be achieved, according to me, through the service of society. Service is the same as *yajna*. Service which comes in the way of the progress of the soul is to be shunned and renounced.

There is a school of thought which says that service may also be rendered at times through lying. But everybody knows that lying degrades the soul and it makes it fall from its high state. Therefore, service through lying should never be thought of. Really speaking, the idea that lying can also serve as a means of service is just a delusion. Its result may seem beneficial to society for a while, but it can be proved that eventually it does more harm than good.

But, then, the charkha does good to society, to the world, and therefore to the soul also. This does not mean that a spinner can *ipso facto* realize the progress of the soul. He who spins for earning a few coppers gets only a few coppers. But he who spins with the object of realizing his soul may attain liberation through it. As has been said, he too becomes fit for liberation who offers water for the thirsty in the spirit of devotion. Of those who repeat the *Gayatri mantra* either for show or for money, the first falls while the other goes on farther than the fulfilment of his desire for money. Liberation is reached wherever the objective is of the highest and purest, and is backed by similar action.

In fact, the knowledge of Brahman, i.e., the Ultimate Reality, is necessary in order to know what is the highest objective and

the highest action. To try to achieve proper fitness for khadi work with the object of the progress of the soul is no small matter. A khadi worker who wants also the progress of the soul must be free from all likes and dislikes. This covers almost all that needs to be said on this question. We have not yet had even a single khadi worker who would be content to receive just enough for his maintenance and settle down to work in unfavourable surroundings in a remote village far away from a railway station. I would expect such a worker to know Sanskrit and music, and have a fairly good knowledge of the essentials of all the important religions. He can put to good use those arts that he knows. But he can serve contentedly even if he knows nothing except the science of charkha.

In order to dispel the darkness and misery of age-long indolence, superstition, hunger and distrust, we need men of austerity who have got to the very door-step of liberation. Even a slight practice of this dharma wards off great calamity¹ and hence is easy. But its perfect implementation is as arduous as the austerities of a man thirsting for self-realization.

I do not mean to suggest that one should give up one's studies and devote oneself immediately to khadi work. I suggest that a student who has courage, strength and faith should take a vow from today onwards that he will become a khadi worker when he has finished his studies. If he makes this resolve one can consider that his service in the cause of khadi has already begun, because he will then choose whatever he decides to learn with the object of acquiring the necessary capacity for this particular type of work.

Let us now examine the second difficulty. The correspondent says:

I do not understand why you give equal importance to the acquisition of knowledge and the learning of craft work at the same time.

I have been asked this question time and again ever since I returned to India, and I have always given the same answer to it, i.e., they must be given an equal importance. It used to be so in olden times. The student went to the teacher with a bundle of sacrificial sticks in his hands which indicated his readiness to work and his humility. The former consisted of fetching wood from the forest and water for the use of the guru. The student also learned something about agriculture, cow-keeping, etc.

Today this is not so, and that is one of the reasons why there is so much hunger, injustice and vice in the world. Literacy, i.e.,

¹ A reference to the *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 40

learning of books, acquisition of intellectual knowledge and useful manual work in various crafts are not different, though they may seem so. Efforts to separate them and break the link that binds them together results in the misuse of knowledge. The intellectual side of it is like the husband and manual labour like his wife. The bond between the two is indissoluble. Divorced from manual labour this husband is today acting like a libertine. He casts his evil eye here, there and everywhere and yet remains unsatisfied and in the end falls down tired and spent.

Indeed, if a comparison has to be made between the two, the first place will have to be given to manual work, for a child does not use his intelligence first but his hands and feet. Gradually, he learns to use his eyes and ears and begins to understand things only when he is four or five years of age. But this does not mean that with greater power of understanding he can neglect his body. If he does so he will destroy both the body and the mind. The intellect finds its expression in action by the body. Today the exercise of the body has come to be confined merely to gymnastics. Formerly this need was satisfied by useful labour. There is no suggestion that boys should not play games or take part in sports, etc. But there should not be any great need for games merely for health's sake. Rather, there should be rest and relaxation of both the body and the mind. There is no place for indolence in education. Whether learning a craft or acquiring knowledge of the three R's, education must always be interesting. If a boy gets bored either with reading and writing or craft work, the fault does not lie with him but with the method of education and the teacher.

While this letter was lying with me, I chanced to read a book about a new educational experiment being undertaken in England. An institution has been set up there which will start centres imparting literary education along with training in craft work. Among the list of the sponsors of this institution I find the names of almost all the eminent British educationists. Their aim is to change the present trend in education and impart to the children both literary education and training in crafts. More such centres will be started at places with plenty of open space around them so that arrangements could be made for their training in crafts. This will enable the boys to earn something while learning. The editor of the book says that this will probably lengthen the period of literary education, but he also states that it will do no harm; on the contrary, it will do good to the students. When a student starts to earn he realizes the value of money honestly earned

and acquires respect for all forms of knowledge imparted to him.

I think the experiments that I carried out in South Africa confirm this view. To the extent that I could see how to carry them out and actually did carry them out they succeeded well.

Very little time is required to go over lessons or do extra-curricular reading if the method of teaching is good. Of course, students do need some time to do what they like—to read as they please or even to while it away in idleness. I learnt a while ago that this is what they call *shavasana* in the yogic science. *Shavasana* means to lie down like a corpse with the feet outstretched and with the body and mind completely relaxed and at ease. Of course, even here the repetition of Ramanama should go on with every breath, but it should not disturb one's rest. For a *brahmachari* every breath is but a repetition of the Lord's name.

But if what I say is correct how is it that this student and his other friends who are not untruthful or vain and who are ready to work hard to reach their goal do not experience its truth?

The tragedy with us is that all of us teachers have been born and have grown up in an age when the accent is on literary education, and training in crafts is very much neglected. And, yet, some of us have detected this fatal flaw. Efforts are being made to correct it, but it is not yet clear how the correction can be made. Besides, the little that we have understood we have not yet the power to implement. Those who can teach *Raghuvamsa* or *Ramayana* or Shakespeare have not either the training or the aptitude to teach carpentry or weaving. They have not the same knowledge of weaving as they have of *Raghuvamsa*; and when they have, they have not the same interest in it. No wonder that, on account of this imperfection in our teachers, we find it difficult to produce the right type of students—students who will be equally at home both in literary learning and in crafts and who will at the same time have character. Therefore, in this period of transition our imperfect and ill-equipped teachers and hard-working students must have both patience and faith. With faith one can cross the seas and storm even the most impregnable forts.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-7-1927

92. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 3, 1927

DEAR MR. SMITH,

I thank you for your two letters and very carefully prepared notes and the Italian pamphlet illustrating the principle and use of castrating forceps.

I have now gone through your notes, and if you are free on Tuesday next at 4 p.m. I shall be delighted to see you.

Could I publish your valuable notes in the pages of *Young India* or make other public use of them?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 12919

93. SPEECH AT OPENING OF KHADI EXHIBITION,
BANGALORE

July 3, 1927

FRIENDS,

You have extended to me a very great privilege by asking me to perform the opening ceremony at this function. It is a matter of great grief to me that I shall be unable to make my opening speech myself. You will agree with me that I ought not to take an undue advantage of the liberty given to me by Dr. Subba Rao and those medical friends who have been helping me. I want therefore to go as gently as possible and not to put an undue strain upon my constitution. I therefore reduced the few ideas that I have to present to you in connection with this Exhibition to writing. Mr. Tathachary will read a translation in the mother tongue of this province and then Mr. Rajagopalachari will read to you the English original. I am sorry that in this province you will not take the trouble of learning what is the lingua franca of India or should be. I have been obliged always, whenever I have come down to the South, to remark upon this deficiency. You have now a Hindi Prachar Office also in Bangalore and I do hope that at no distant time as I expect you will come up to Tamil Nadu and Andhra Desha in Hindi as in khadi and so make up your

deficiency with reference to ignorance in Hindi. Had I seen in front of me only my Mussalman brethren I know that I could have spoken to them in Hindi. They are preserving the prestige of the lingua franca but the Hindus are lagging far behind in the South. I hope that you will run a close race with the Mussalman brethren in Mysore and make up your deficiency in Hindi. With these few words I shall call upon my friend to read the Kanarese translation.

After the reading of the Kanarese version of Mahatmaji's address was over, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari read in clear terms the following address of Gandhiji in English:

FRIENDS,

It is a matter of great pleasure to me to meet you in this lovely city and find in our midst our veteran leader, *Poojaniya* Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji. Hindu tradition makes me always feel embarrassed to take a leading part in any function at which he is present. For ever since my return to our beloved country, I have looked up to him as to an elder brother. But what I feel to be a call of duty enables me somewhat to overcome the embarrassment.

On this my first permitted appearance on a public platform since my illness, let me thank His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore and its people for the great kindness and consideration shown to me during my prolonged convalescence. Your lavish hospitality has made illness itself attractive. But it has grieved me to observe, as I did in the appeal issued by my friends for enlisting your support for khadi, that they had endeavoured to exploit my illness by suggesting that if you all supported khadi by subscribing to funds and adopting it for your dress, my recovery would be quicker. I would ask you to dismiss this consideration from your minds altogether. If khadi makes no appeal to your reason and has no place in national economy, it must be suppressed in spite of my weakness for it. In great national causes, personal affections must be discounted as disturbing factors. And if I have become so soft as to become enervated for want of support for my whims and fancies, or may be, even follies, it is surely better for the nation that I should become and remain so ill as to be unfit for further mischief.

The Exhibition, which it will be my privilege presently to declare open, is a right and proper kind of appeal. It is carefully designed so as to give you an ocular demonstration of what khadi meant and what it has already achieved. If its careful study conquers

your reason, but in spite of the conviction of your reason, you find yourselves too weak to translate its dictates into action, then, indeed, let your affection for me give you heart and courage to overcome your weakness. For I stand before you as a self-chosen representative of the dumb, semi-starved, because workless, millions of India whom the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das appropriately called *Daridranarayana*. Every pice you contribute to the support of khadi, every yard of khadi you buy, means so much concrete sympathy shown by you for these millions.

Let me then summarize the conclusions of workers in the service of *Daridranarayana* which you may test for yourselves if you will patiently study the literature that you will find on the Exhibition stalls as also the results of khadi activity which you will find demonstrated at those stalls. The Prize Essay on Hand-spinning by Messrs S. V. Puntambekar and N. S. Varadachari traces for you the history of the ruin of the only national and universal cottage industry of India as also the possibilities of its revival. You will find it proved there that in this country there are millions of peasants who have no occupation for at least four months in the year, and that the only possible occupation for them in their own cottages is nothing but hand-spinning. Many good and well-intentioned people have suggested most ambitious and attractive schemes of village reorganization. But I make bold to say that not one of these schemes is at present in operation and that it is not possible to enforce any of them, at least during the lifetime of this generation; whereas, the spinning-wheel has been making its silent but slow progress throughout the length and breadth of India. Its revival dates from 1920 during which year, in spite of the forest of white caps one saw in the principal streets of cities, in reality there was not to be found khadi worth more than one lakh at the outside. But the carefully prepared report of the All-India Spinners' Association for the last year will show you that during the year 1926 alone over Rs. 23 lakhs worth of khadi was produced throughout India and that the sales amounted to Rs. 28 lakhs. Capital investment by the Association amounts to over Rs. 18 lakhs. Fifty-thousand spinners worked during the year under review for the production of this khadi. These spinners, before they took to hand-spinning, had not other earnings or occupation during the time that they gave to spinning. Their earnings have ranged from one pice to two annas per day according to the time they gave and the skill they put in it. The very fact that fifty thousand women were eager to do this work for what may appear to us to be a miserable wage should be sufficient workable demon-

stration that hand-spinning is not an uneconomic, profitless or unpractical proposition. In many instances women walk four miles to receive their cotton. Round hand-spinning as the centre have been built up many other occupations. Weavers, dhobis, dyers, printers and carders who had either died out or were dying out have found in the revival of hand-spinning a new hope. One new weaver and one new carder comes into being against ten spinners and their wages are anything between four annas and one and a half rupees per day. 1,500 villagers are being thus served by an army of more or less educated workers whose salary ranges from Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 per month. Not less than 1,000 such young men and some young women find an honest livelihood in this national service. The spinners and other workers include Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, Sudras, the so-called untouchables, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis, Sikhs, in fact every caste and creed. Besides the paid workers, there are several absolutely unpaid volunteers too engaged in this work of reconstruction. In Satis Chandra Das Gupta and Profulla Chandra Ghosh, Bengal has given to this service two of Acharya Ray's most brilliant pupils. Satis Chandra Das Gupta had built up Acharya Ray's chemical works. Profulla Chandra Ghosh had been assistant assayer in the Government Mint. Both left their lucrative posts to give themselves to khadi. Several distinguished lawyers, even doctors, some of whom you know personally, have given up their profession and taken to this work. And it is slowly dawning upon the merchant class that khadi is a service which does demand their mercantile ability. You will, perhaps, now understand why I have called this hand-spinning movement the greatest co-operative effort of modern times. And if six years' progress, insignificant as it may appear compared to the mighty result in view, is an indication of the future, God willing, at no distant time we shall find our villages, which at the present moment seem to be crumbling to ruins, becoming hives of honest and patient industry.

The Exhibition will enable you to understand all the processes that cotton goes through before it reaches you as khadi. For you will see ginning, carding, sliver-making, spinning and weaving demonstrated before you. You will see also the very simple tools and machinery which are being used for these processes. The charts will tell you the output of these little machines, most of which can be easily made in our villages.

I must not also omit to draw the attention of fashionable, artistic and moneyed members of my audience to the well-filled stall where you will see handsomely worked and embroidered fine

khadi in the preparation of which nearly 400 girls in Bombay are earning anything between six annas and one and a half rupees per day. It is an organization conducted by Rashtriya Stri Sabha of Bombay, which, among other self-sacrificing ladies, includes the grand-daughters of the Grand Old Man of India, Dadabhai Naoroji, and a sister belonging to the great Petit family.

Madhusudan Das was a brilliant lawyer in Cuttack. The poverty of Orissa woke him from his dreams and he saw that necessary as work with plough and oxen in our fields was, we should soon be reduced to the status of the bovine species unless we added to our agriculture some industry which called forth the cunning of the hand, and he has himself become a finished artisan.

But I must not any longer stand between you and the feast for your eyes and intellect that has been prepared by the Exhibition Committee. May it enable you to appreciate the priceless value of khadi as a central fact in village organization and may it induce you to establish between yourselves and the poor villagers a living bond by sending those of you who have the leisure and the inclination to villages to deliver the message of the spinning-wheel, and all of you at least by adopting khadi for your dress and household use! In the work of God, as I venture to suggest it is, the harvest is indeed rich but the labourers are few. Every one of you can, if you will, add to the number.

I have much pleasure in declaring the Exhibition open, and I pray to God that He may bless the work, if it is commendable in His sight and the workers be found worthy.

This over amidst impressive silence, Mahatmaji spoke the following few words in conclusion:

FRIENDS,

I shall presently perform the opening ceremony by uncovering a model charkha prepared at the Industrial Shop of the Department of Industries in Mysore. Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande, in his opening speech inviting me to perform the ceremony, drew your attention to the great help that is being rendered by the State and especially the Department of Industries to this movement. They have prepared many such charkhas. You will see in the Exhibition Court a variety of charkhas, old spinning-wheels, which are still to be found in a more or less dilapidated condition in Mysore and the evolution that a spinning-wheel has gone through during these six years. The charkha that I shall have the privilege of presently exposing to your view is by no means the

best in the scale of evolution. But we thought it was in the fitness of things that an article made in Mysore should be first exposed to view.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya will lead you to the Exhibition Court. He has kindly consented to do this work for me in order to spare me the strain of going through the Exhibition Court. He will also continue the present proceedings this evening at 5-30 when he will give you what his heart prompts him to give you on what he has seen in the Exhibition Court, and what he has gathered during these six years about khaddar and I do hope that you will all come and listen to the message that he might have to deliver to you. You will not attempt whilst he takes the leaders to the court to crowd round, otherwise it will not be really possible to study what is to be studied in the Exhibition. It is designed to be really a study for those who want to understand what this khadi movement stands for and what it has been able to do. It is not a mere ocular demonstration to be dismissed out of our minds, immediately we have gone out of the Exhibition Court. It is not a cinema. It is actually a nursery where a student, a lover of humanity, a lover of his own country may come and see things for himself. I invite sceptics to go there and pause not a few moments, but to go there and pause a few hours and I promise that he will find himself amply rewarded and possibly his scepticism also will be dismissed. I invite the candid critic also to go there and I have no doubt that he will find imperfections, he will find those charts not drawn in artistic fashion, but he will find heart put into those charts. They give you facts and figures which are compiled by students who want only to serve truth and nothing but the truth. You will find there always an understatement but not an overstatement. With these words I have much pleasure to uncover the charkha and I hope that you will all support this movement as it deserves.

Amidst great applause Mahatmaji then uncovered a charkha raised to the seat of Gandhiji by Mr. Deshpande.

The Hindu, 4-7-1927

94. LETTER TO MIRABEHN¹

July 4, 1927

CHI. MIRA²,

I had expected a letter from you today. But there is nothing as yet. There is just a slight chance of one more post. I hope you were not overcrowded in the train, that there was no difficulty at Guntakal. After you went there was a wire from Vallunekar asking Mahadev to suggest your breaking journey at Golanad to see Kakasaheb, himself and Gangu. But you were gone and I did not think it worth while wiring in the hope (very distant) of catching you before you could leave Bombay.

How well you put it? You were parting but to come nearer. It was quite true. You did well in coming and equally well in leaving when you did.

Remember my parting words. You are not to kill yourself or ruin your health in trying to finish Hindi in two months. Let us hope that you will finish it. But it does not matter in the least if you cannot. Yours is but to try. Again do not take the vow to use only Hindi in Wardha unless you feel practically driven to it. Nothing hangs by it. You need not consider what I would like. In matters like this there should be no question of considering my opinion or wishes. After all it is a question of choosing the best way of *doing* Hindi. The way that suits you is the best for you and no other.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

The opening ceremony went off yesterday without any difficulty. I stood the strain well. The doctors came afterwards and they were satisfied to find no alteration in the pulse. I hope you left your constipation here.

B.

¹ In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "I had now left Bhagavad-bhakti Ashram, Rewari, and was spending a short time at Sabarmati after having been to see Bapu at Bangalore, and before going to Vinoba's Ashram at Wardha for continuing my Hindi studies."

² The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

[PPS.]

Immediately after handing this for the post I got your expected beautiful letter¹. It is perfectly intelligible. There are very few mistakes. Continue to write as often as you like.

B.

From the original: G.W. 5243. Courtesy: MirabeHN

95. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Silence Day [July 4, 1927]²

CHI. MIRA,

I have sent the Monday letter to Sabarmati. But if you leave for Wardha before getting it, you should not miss your Monday mail at Wardha either; hence this epistle.

I had expected your letter today but it has not come; it must tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Don't worry. The letter addressed to Sabarmati is in English.

[PPS.]

I have just had your Hindi letter. It is beautiful.

From the Hindi original: G.W. 5242. Courtesy: MirabeHN

96. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Ashadh Sud 5³ [July 4, 1927]

SISTERS,

I thought of you yesterday. Exhibitions and such other activities are really more the work of women than of men. No one was able to decorate his or her stall better than Mithubehn. It is just what one would expect; because all the twenty-four hours

¹ In Hindi

² From the postmark

³ The source has Ashadh Sud 6, which is evidently a slip. The letter was written on the day following the opening of the Exhibition.

she keeps thinking how khadi can be made more lovely. Under her guidance, starting with a few, now about four hundred girls work on khadi and earn their livelihood, or wear only khadi spun by themselves.

Manibehn has been able to bring credit to herself and to the Exhibition by means of her carding bow.

As so many Ashram people have now arrived, the recitation of the *Gita* in the mornings has been started. Today Manibehn recited the fourth chapter. She had recited the first chapter too. Her intonation is good. Indeed all of you should learn to read the *Gita* in the proper way and understand its meaning. Just as a woman is not accomplished unless she is a good cook, so also a woman who does not know the *Gita* cannot be said to be accomplished.

Who is in charge of the store at present?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3656

97. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 5, 1927

DEAR MR. PETIT,

The enclosed is a copy repeated at Bangalore of a cable¹ received from Andrews at Sabarmati. It speaks for itself. It will be a great calamity if Mr. Sastri's health breaks down, or if he has to undergo financial worries. Personally, I think that the Government of India will not be able to meet the special requirements in the present case. It would be wrong to set an awkward precedent, and yet, if Mr. Sastri's mission is to succeed, he must have ample funds enabling him to move from place to place and find decent accommodation. Future agents won't need triple accommodation. But Mr. Sastri has to break new ground and he has therefore to exploit not merely his official position for reducing

¹ Dated July 4. It read: "Sastri's health causing great anxiety. Financial worries superadded because allowances altogether insufficient. Cabled Viceroy Department. Sastri dislikes anything except constructive. Press notice suggesting absolute necessity ample allowances inform public. Probably necessary upkeep three houses. Hotels impossible. Watch my press cables."

the discordant elements to harmony but he has got to exploit his own special gifts to that end. His more solid work therefore will be extra-official. In order to be able to do this, he must have funds. South Africa like India is a place of distances. Between Cape Town and Durban it is nearly 1,400 miles by rail, and in each place he must have accommodation of his own. If he went to hotels, he would be inaccessible to the majority of the Indians who are poor.

I do not think we can state all these things in the press and make a public appeal for funds. The only legitimate thing therefore to do is for the Imperial Citizenship Association to place at Mr. Sastri's disposal a fairly large sum. No time should be lost. I have not a shadow of a doubt that such an expense would be a fair charge upon the funds of the I.C.A.

I suggest that Rs. 25,000/- may be at once transferred to him to be used as he may think necessary for his own personal convenience. He can be trusted to use the amount judiciously and to refund what he may not need.

For the sake of speedy despatch, I am sending a copy of this letter to the members of the Committee whom I know and who I think will be interested in the subject-matter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

J. [B.] PETIT, Esq.
IMPERIAL CITIZENSHIP ASSOCIATION
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12365

98. LETTER TO JOSHI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 5, 1927

MY DEAR JOSHI,

I believe you are on the Committee of the Imperial Citizenship Association. The enclosed¹ speaks for itself. If you agree with the view I have set forth in the letter, you will please expedite business.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12365

99. LETTER TO K. S. NATARAJAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 5, 1927

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter to Mr. Petit.² I do not need to add anything except to ask you please to expedite the despatch of funds, if you agree with the substance of my letter to Mr. Petit.

Yours sincerely,

K. S. NATARAJAN, ESQ.
"INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER"
FORT
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12365

100. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 5, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. Last was received only yesterday.

Your letter about the business of the Council was placed before the Council. Jamnalalji and Shankerlal will write to you fully. I have not attended any of the meetings except the first one which I simply opened without any remarks and retired. I think the Council has confirmed the original proposal to relieve

¹ & ² *Vide* item 97 above.

me from all administrative work. I remain the president; but Jamnalalji becomes the officiating chairman of the Council. And I think that this is the best thing to do. This spares me the trouble of having to go into every detail of administration.

Your suggestion that the Council meeting should be held at different centres has been adopted.

No vital changes should be made in the constitution for five years according to the original intention. To change officers every year, and especially the secretaries, would be a dangerous thing. Secretaries should be helped by fresh suggestions. But as we are really a business house, administrative control should be continuous, if we are to make the house stable. And, personally, I think that it is impossible to get a secretary more energetic, more conscientious than Shankerlal.

Your letter about Hemprabha Devi's latest developments provides food for deep reflection. Let there be nothing done in a hurry.

The suggestion about maintenance is startling and I would like a long time in order that it may soak into me. We must meet before anything is done. Supposing that I am free from the Southern tour about the end of August or middle of September and go through it without any mishap, would you have me to undertake the Bengal tour in gentle stages? Please do not be anxious about me; for, I shall do nothing in haste and I shall watch myself as the tour progresses. Nobody wants to run avoidable risks. Both Rajagopalachari and Gangadharrao are taking elaborate precautions to avoid the slightest strain. Chikballapur was for them also a good lesson.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19786

101. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

Ashadh Sud 6 [July 5, 1927]¹

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your cable. You must have received my reply to it. You must have got my letters even before my reply to the cable. But I sent the cable as I thought that would make both of you happier, especially Sushila. If Manilal alone were there, I would not have spent money on a cable and would have rebuked him for wasting

¹ From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

money on one. But considering that Sushila was in a foreign country, that she has never been abroad before now and that, therefore, she would be happy to hear from me, I thought it proper to send a cable. I am glad to know that both of you would like to receive letters from me, but at the same time I should like to make it clear that, if you do not receive one, you should not suppose that my failure to write was due to indifference or carelessness. It may be that I cannot find the time to write because of pressure of work, or that I miss writing because I do not remember the date on which the mail leaves. If I am ill, you will have somehow heard about it. But now I shall be more careful about writing.

Sushila should forget her attachment to her parental home. We ought always to remember our parents, but it is not possible to live for ever with them. A son cannot do so. How, then, is it possible for a daughter? Her home is with her husband. Sushila should, therefore, understand that her home is where Manilal is and learn to live like Savitri¹. She should protect herself and also protect Manilal. In both of you maintaining simplicity, truthfulness, compassion and patriotism, despite the many temptations surrounding you, in your observing self-restraint as befits you and protecting each other's body and character lies the success of your marriage.

Sushila's physical strength does not seem to have increased in proportion to the increase in her weight. There is only one way of increasing it: that she should eat nothing but wholesome food, and only as much as can be digested, and take as much physical exercise in the open air as she can without getting exhausted, and that both of you should refrain, as much as possible, from sexual indulgence. I am a living example before you of how much even mental indulgence tells on the body. I failed to wake up for thirty years, and reap the fruits of that to this day. My body is comparatively good. I have, it may be said, suffered from very few illnesses. Still, I know that had I waked up earlier, my body would have been as strong as adamant. My capacity to serve would also have been far greater than it is. There was none to awaken me or to keep me vigilant. I am there to awaken you both and keep you on your guard. Learn from my experience,

I keep good health. As a khadi exhibition is on here these days and as there is to be a meeting of the Charkha Sangh, Jamna-

¹ Who wrested the soul of her husband back from the God of Death. The story is told in the *Mahabharata*.

lalji, Mithubehn, JamnabeHN, Maganlal, Keshu, AnasuyabeHN, Shankerlal and others have come here. In a day or two the nest will be empty again.

You send your letters needlessly to Amreli. If you write the word 'personal' on your letters, no one will read them, but why do you wish that no one in the Ashram should read them? It would be all right if you wish that no one should read those letters of yours in which you consult me about your moral problems, but what can be there in ordinary letters that no one should read?

We all saw your photograph which Jamnalalji has received. The photograph which you have sent for me or Ba has not yet reached us. It must be on the way. Our time is wasted in inquiring about it without knowing to what address it was sent.

I hope you receive the translation of the *Gita* regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4724

102. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 6, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Your telegram is disturbing. No letters yet received. I shall anxiously await further news. May God keep you.

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5244. Courtesy: MirabeHN

103. LETTER TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 6, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your confidential letter of the 13th June last with the enclosures. I appreciate the honour you have done me by sending me your draft Bill, and I beg to tender my thanks to those members of the Independent Labour Party who have worked at the Bill.

I am however unable to give any effective advice or guidance as my work for the present lies in a different direction. I am devoting the whole of my energy to developing internal strength. I have therefore very little time left for studying the question what form the final constitution should take. I do not in any shape or form discount the importance of that question. But I know my own limitations, and so, as far as possible, I help the movement towards arriving at a suitable constitution by non-interference and sympathetic watch. But I take it that you have circulated the draft Bill among many other public men in India and invited their opinion. If at any time I feel that I can do any useful work in this connection, I shall not hesitate to correspond with you.

Yours sincerely,

A. FENNER BROCKWAY, Esq.
14, GREAT GEORGE STREET
LONDON S.W. I

From a photostat: S.N. 12530

104. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 6, 1927

MY DEAR GIRIRAJ,

I have your letter. I like your heart searching. There is always one danger in this process. A man who is not self-possessed becomes morose and imagines all kinds of things about himself. This is the state of a hypochondriac. Do you know what that word means in the medical world? It means a person who imagines every disease to be in himself of which he reads a description. Whilst, therefore, it is the most proper thing to rid oneself of any weakness of which one is conscious there must be nothing imagined and there should be no brooding. Instead of saying to yourself, 'I am wretched, so evil and I shall never be good', the proper formula is, 'I will be good; for, God is good and merciful; He will make me good.' The first formula is weakening and the second is invigorating.

Your statement that an ideal cook is he who feels about the diners as a mother does for her children is perfect. It is of course difficult to feel like that; but by practice everything becomes easy. Be patient with everybody, return a kind answer to every

enquiry and give up the last chapati and the last spoonful of dal, even though there may be nothing left for you and those who may be the last to dine being waiters. You may prepare something for yourself to satisfy hunger. This may mean additional time. Never mind it. And, therefore, cooks and waiters should never have any fixed appointments after the completion of kitchen work. There must always be a wide margin left for emergencies.

You must not regard yourself as unfit for the work. A man who wants to do work for society and in society, that is, in company with others, has to have practically the same qualities whether it is in the kitchen or in the sanitary yard or in the weaving-shed, and no man becomes a worthy human being unless he has gone through these purifying fires. I, therefore, want you to compose yourself completely, and find your satisfaction in your work, dealing with every emergency that may arise. I know that all this is easy enough to say. It is not so easy to practise. Nevertheless all our learning and everything we do has to be done in order to arrive at this equableness. I hope, therefore, you will never accept defeat.

Do please write to me whenever you like. Always try to cultivate a compact style. But if you cannot say what you want to, briefly, I do not mind even your long letters. But it will be a good practice for you after having written your long letter to reduce it to a quarter and see whether you cannot say the same thing in quarter length.

Yours sincerely,

GIRIRAJ KISHORE
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat: S.N. 14180

105. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 6, 1927

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I need you badly if you can possibly spare yourself from Council work. Malaviyaji and I have been considering the advisability of establishing an All-India Anti-untouchability Association. Jamnalalji, Rajagopalachari, Shankerlal, Rajendra Babu and others think likewise. There is no man to take up the work so suitable like you. Jamnalalji thinks that I must press you to come out at any cost. I won't do that. But I thought I must place this proposition before you, and if the inner voice prompts you, then indeed I want you. But if you think that you can better utilize your abilities for the service of the country by being in the Council, I have nothing to say. Just think the matter over well and let me know. If you come to a firm opinion which you can transmit to me by wire, you may even wire.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM, M.L.C.
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a microfilm: S.N. 14619

106. LETTER TO LILIAN EDGER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 6, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Krishnadas has handed your letter to me and the yarn sent with it. The yarn is not at all bad. It can of course be more even. I do not think that age is a bar. I know many as old as you who have taken to spinning and who have become very good spinners. No doubt it requires much patience in the beginning.

You have asked me whether the small quantities that you spin can be of any help to the poor. I say unhesitatingly, "Yes." This does not mean that the yarn you may be sending will be separately woven into khadi and sent to the poor. That is not

what we are doing with the yarn contribution we are receiving. But what we are doing is to convert such yarn into khadi, and utilize the proceeds of the sale of that khadi for providing spinning and other ancillary work to the poor people. This is the very best help that can be rendered to them.

I quite agree with you that it is difficult for individuals to distribute their charity judiciously. The vast majority of street beggars are mere professional idlers when they are not much worse, and those who have money to spare do an ill-service to these beggars and to the country by giving them money, food or clothing. We have found by experience that we do no service by distributing amongst poor people khadi prepared from yarn contributions. The chief need is neither food nor clothing but work which they can do in their cottages. But where it becomes necessary to provide clothing side by side with work, we do not hesitate to do so. But that happens only in rare cases. The chief value, in my opinion, of any person spinning by way of sacrifice lies in the work itself, and in the promotion of the work atmosphere that is created in the country and in the promotion of a tangible feeling for the poorest in the land.

Now for your questions:

1. It is wrong to draw the thread and the twist. The thread must be drawn whilst the spindle is revolving rapidly round its own centre. This movement ensures the proper twist. Drawing of the yarn and the movement of the spindle go on simultaneously so that there is no difficulty about continuously drawing the thread with ease. And whilst the thread is being drawn the sliver is held fairly tight between the fingers so that the twist does not reach the thread up to the very end which is held between the fingers.

2. Wax has to be used occasionally for the *mal*, that is the chord that goes round the wheel and the spindle.

3. Oil has not to be used very often. The ordinary machine oil [can] serve the purpose. But in the absence of that, a drop of the ordinary cooking oil is quite serviceable. An occasional drop on the axle where it touches the uprights and on the holders which hold the spindle makes for smooth movement.

4. It will be better to wind off after an hour's spinning. Those who can spin very rapidly unwind every 20 minutes. When in unwinding the thread tangles, you know that the cone has not been made tight. If your yarn is well-twisted, you can wind it round the spindle each time fairly tight and the cone should feel hard to the touch and not at all soft,

5. When the chord breaks and if you cannot twist a chord out of your own yarn, you can use any bazaar twine of the diameter of your chord.

Lastly, if you will become a good spinner and if you will spin for sacrifice, it is really necessary for you to watch someone who spins well. Wherever you may be whether in Kashi or Darbhanga, there is no difficulty about your getting proper assistance.

Wishing you every success in your effort,

Yours sincerely,

MISS LILIAN EDGER
CARE OF POST MASTER
SRINAGAR (KASHMIR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19785

107. *LETTER TO SECRETARY, HINDI SAHITYA
SAMMELAN*

BANGALORE,
Ashadh Shukla 7 [July 6, 1927]

DEAR SIR,

I got your telegram yesterday. I hope you have my reply. You must have my earlier letter too. I am pained by your telegram. In my humble opinion, it was not decent to hold out a threat of legal action. I have said on several occasions and also reiterated in my letter that if you think the work accomplished here as the Sammelan's property, well, it can be settled by arbitration. I can understand that it will be your duty to go to a court of law if you hold that it would be in the interest of the Sammelan to obtain the court's verdict. If you deem it proper to go to the court, do not blame Pandit Harihar Sharma. Whatever changes in work have been brought about by him had my sanction. I have always thought that it was I who through the Sammelan conducted the work in the South. I always thought that by entrusting this work to the Sammelan I have only enhanced its prestige and that in case of a disagreement the Sammelan would not move to take charge of the work nor obstruct me from carrying it on according to my own plans. I still desire your co-operation in this work but if you think that the funds collected by Jannalalji and those by Panditji in the South were all to be

handed over to the Sammelan, I am sorry the matter can be decided only by arbitration or in a court of law.

Yours,

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 11817

108. A LETTER

[Before July 7, 1927]¹

Your questions are really very good but among the readers of *Young India* and *Navajivan* few would be eager for a casuistical enquiry into this question. I shall therefore rest content with answering you alone.

Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose's theory is not new. Our Shastras recognize the presence of life in plants as in human beings. Certainly therefore the statement that life lives on life is established by facts. And this is the one reason why the body is regarded as an appendage of the *atman* and its absence essential for the supreme state of the *atman*. Although all life must be embodied only through some sort of violence, the question still remains what form of life should comprise life's food. Human physiology as well as the experience of the wise shows that the right food for us is the fruit ripened on the tree and suchlike. The pure seeker will not use even fire. We may not reach this ideal state, yet it is our duty to strive for it as far as we can, and in this our endeavour meat-eating can have no place. [Feeding on] plant life should be the limit for us.

2. I can say from my own experience and that of others that there is absolutely no danger of tuberculosis and such other diseases resulting from vegetarian diet even in countries like England. Today thousands of Englishmen are vegetarians, [though] usually they do take eggs.

3. Vegetarian restaurants make use of egg and milk; they neither serve nor cook meat. They place eggs and milk in the same category and agree that it would be better to give up both as neither is a vegetable. This is my opinion too. Barring mother's milk during infancy man has no right to take milk. I shall say something about this in *Young India*. You will find it in the course of the autobiography. Till now it was my belief that every

¹ From the reference to the discussion about milk in the "Autobiography" (Pt. IV, Ch. VIII), which appeared in *Young India*, 7-7-1927

egg could be hatched. Now I learn from experts that a hen lays eggs even without mating and that such eggs cannot be hatched. These eggs are as much without life and therefore as unobjectionable as milk. Now I am wondering whether eggs may not have a place in a vegetarian diet since milk is included. But this much I do know that from the standpoint of *brahmacharya* eggs are to be eschewed as are many vegetables too. But this is a digression. Today I am considering eggs purely from the point of view of vegetarian diet.

I congratulate you on writing in Hindi.

Yours,

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12325

109. NOTES

DESHBANDHU DAY AT DARJEELING

The reader will be glad to share the following with me from Mrs. Blair from Darjeeling:

It may perhaps interest you to know that the Darjeeling Mahila Samiti held a meeting on June 15th in memory of the great patriot, the late Mr. C. R. Das, at which Shrimati Urmila Devi spoke. Her subject was the wearing of khadi and the obligation on those, who wished to help the poor of their country, to spin at least half an hour a day. On the following Wednesday, 22nd instant, nine of the members in the presence of Shrimati Urmila Devi promised to spin at least half an hour a day. Later on they may feel worthy to become members of the A.I.S.A.¹ At present they are going to spin wool in order to be able to give warm clothes in the winter to the Baby Clinic and the Hospital.²

It is a good thing that the ladies of Darjeeling observed the anniversary of Deshbandhu in the manner described by Mrs. Blair. I hope that the nine ladies who have given their names will persist in their effort. We have in this country a habit of making promises in a fit of enthusiasm, keeping them for a time, and then forgetting them altogether. I hope that these members will be steadfast enough to continue their sacrificial spinning so long as a single Indian has to starve for want of work in his or her own home. One knows the fashion of saying, 'If they have no

¹ All-India Spinners Association

² For Gandhiji's reply to Mrs. Blair, *vide* "Letter to Mrs. Blair", 28-6-1927.

work, why do they not emigrate, why do they not go to the tea plantations, why do they not go to the cities where labour is in demand, and earn as much as eight annas?" I have in these pages often demonstrated the falsity of this argument. Millions cannot leave their homes, even if they wish to. And it would be a calamity if they all did. Coal at the pit's mouth in Newcastle is probably to be had for nothing, or very little. But such cannot be the case in Bombay. If Bombay must use Newcastle coal, it has to pay for transport. Similarly work to be had in Bombay will be of no use to the millions, who cannot, will not and must not leave their cottages and fields. Work has got therefore to be transported to their cottages, and inversely as in the case of coal at Newcastle, the work transported to cottages is less paying than work in Bombay in terms of coin. But in terms of mental satisfaction, and grain or vegetable, the work obtained in the cottages is far more profitable than that obtainable in Bombay.

ADI KARNATAKAS

All the readers of *Young India* may not know who *Adi Karnatakas* are. They are the suppressed classes of Karnatak. Just as at the Raniparaj Conference, friends of the Raniparaj altered the name Kaliparaj to the more appropriate name Raniparaj, so the suppressed classes all over India have been not unnaturally taking for themselves names which have no bad odour about them. In this spirit the suppressed classes in Karnatak describe themselves as *Adi Karnatakas*. And so I notice under that heading two paragraphs in the address of the Dewan of Mysore to its Representative Assembly. One observes from these paragraphs, that

exceptional facilities have been created for the education of the members of these classes, and methods have been adopted to suit their special circumstances. Among these methods are scholarships, exemptions from school fees, a free supply of clothes and school requisites, free hostels; and over and above the right of admission to all schools, 605 special schools have been provided for them. There are altogether 16,575 students of this class receiving tuition in Mysore.

An attempt is being made to organize a co-operative agricultural scheme with due provision of land, live-stock and direction.

The paragraphs end with the following suggestion:

These people ought to be the strength of our strength. Shall we let them become our weakness? They have a rankling sense of wrong which only kindness can heal. The aim should be to "Hinduize" them more and more, for they belong to the Hindu community, and to

offer them every facility to remain within the fold. They will be a mighty accession to the strength of our body politic; if not, they will be an equally heavy subtraction from it. Alienated, they will introduce an additional element of heterogeneity which will further complicate the already difficult problems of administration. No possible means of amelioration should be neglected, and every friend of Hindu society, every lover of Mysore, should supplement the efforts of Government with all his strength.

This suggestion is a gentle warning both to the Christian missionary and the Mussalman missionary not to try to wean these suppressed classes from Hinduism, but if they at all wish to interfere, to act so that they may become better Hindus. If the suggestion is acted upon by the parties concerned, it will be a substantial contribution towards the attainment of real peace in the land.

Young India, 7-7-1927

110. THE COW IN MYSORE

I have received letters from Cow-protection Societies in Mysore, protesting against my letter¹ to the Mysore Cow-protection Committee appointed by the State. My letter was in answer to a questionnaire issued by that Committee. Extracts from that letter published in the Madras Press led the Cow-protection Societies in question to think that I was totally against legal prohibition of cow-slaughter under any circumstances whatsoever. I was surprised to receive these letters, and I wondered whether, in a moment of forgetfulness or inadvertence, I had ever said that there should never be any legislation against cow-slaughter. I therefore asked for a copy of my letter from the Cow-protection Committee, which they have kindly sent me. As the letter represents my considered opinion, and as it has been given some importance by the Committee and has caused misunderstanding among the public of Mysore interested in this very important question, I reproduce the whole of it below:²

Neither the discussion with the members of the several Cow-protection Societies, nor the correspondence before me warrants any alteration of the opinion expressed in this letter. The reader

¹ *Vide* Vol. XXXII, pp. 545-6.

² Not reproduced here

will observe that I have nowhere said that there should never be any legislation against cow-slaughter. But what I have said is that there should be no prohibition of cow-slaughter by legislation *without the consent of the intelligent majority of the subjects* adversely affected by it. Therefore, the Mysore State will be perfectly justified, and, indeed, bound to undertake legislation prohibiting cow-slaughter, if it has the consent of the intelligent majority of its Mussalman population. The members of the Cow-protection Societies that met me assured me that the relations between Hindus and Mussalmans in Mysore were cordial, and that a majority of Mussalmans in Mysore were as much in favour of legislative prohibition as Hindus, and I was glad to be assured by them that many Europeans, especially missionaries, were in favour of such prohibition. So far, therefore, as the question of legislation in Mysore is concerned, if the statements made to me are correct, the way is clear for legislative prohibition. But let me reiterate what I have pointed out in my letter, and what I have emphasized so often in these columns, namely, that legislative prohibition is the smallest part of any programme of cow-protection. The trend of the letters received by me, and the activity of most Cow-protection Societies, however, show, that they would be satisfied with mere legal prohibition. I wish to warn all such societies against staking their all on legislation. We have already too much of it in this law-ridden country. People seem to think that when a law is passed against any evil, it will die without any further effort. There never was a grosser self-deception. Legislation is intended and is effective against an ignorant or a small evil-minded minority; but no legislation which is opposed by an intelligent and organized public opinion, or under cover of religion by a fanatical minority, can ever succeed. The more I study the question of cow-protection, the stronger the conviction grows upon me, that protection of the cow and her progeny can be attained, only if there is continuous and sustained constructive effort along the lines suggested by me. There may be, probably there is, room for supplementing or amending the constructive programme sketched by me. But there is no room for doubting the absolute necessity of a vast constructive programme if India's cattle are to be saved from destruction. And the preservation of cattle really means also a step towards the preservation of the starving millions of India's men and women who have also been reduced to the condition of her cattle. The Indian States undoubtedly can in this as in many such matters give the lead to the rest of India. And among the States, probably, there is none better fitted, or

better able, to make the right beginning than Mysore. It has, from all accounts received by me, a popular prince, an enlightened public opinion, no Hindu-Mussalman question, and a sympathetic Dewan. Mysore has also the Imperial Institute of Dairying and Animal Husbandry, and Mr. William Smith, the Imperial Dairy Expert, is himself stationed at Bangalore. The State has, therefore, all the materials necessary for evolving a constructive policy. Add to this the fact that Nature has endowed Mysore with a glorious climate. The title a Hindu king dearly cherishes is that of defender of the cow and the Brahmin. The cow means not merely the animal, the giver of milk and innumerable other things to India, but it means also the helpless, the downtrodden and the poor. Brahmin means the representative of divine knowledge and experience. But today, alas! Hindu princes are powerless, and in many cases even indifferent, if not unwilling, to ensure this full protection. Unless the States and the people co-operate with one another to control and regulate the breeding of cattle, the production of milk supply, and the disposal of dead cattle, for the benefit of the people as a whole, the cattle of India will be bred but to die an unnatural death at the hands of the butcher, notwithstanding all the legislation that may be passed against cow-slaughter. The ignorance of Nature's Law will be accepted as no excuse when men and women of India appear before the Throne of Judgment.

I was shocked to learn from the members of the Cow-protection Society that beef slaughtered in Bangalore and in Mysore was given to the animals in the State gardens, that beef was much cheaper than any other meat, and that the *Adi Karnatakas*, who claimed to be and were recognized as Hindus, and who knew the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* as well as any other Hindu, were addicted to beef-eating. If all this is true, the better-placed Hindus are clearly to blame for such a state of things. If the *Adi Karnatakas* do not respect the sanctity of the cow, it is because they know no better. But what is to be said of the Hindus who have so criminally neglected their brethren as to omit to acquaint them with a fundamental truth of Hinduism?

Young India, 7-7-1927

111. WHAT IS A POLITICAL ASSOCIATION?

I read the following in *The Hindu* of the 25th June last:

Under Rule 23 (1) of Government Servants' Conduct Rules, Government have, I understand, prohibited Government servants from subscribing to the Khadi Fund, which is in aid of the All-India Spinners' Association. The reasons for this prohibition are stated to be, (1) that it is an association, established with the consent of the All-India Congress Committee, as an integral part of the Congress organization, (2) that it declares itself prepared to receive and acknowledge yarn subscriptions for membership of the Congress and (3) that therefore it must be regarded as a political association.

If the information supplied by the special correspondent of *The Hindu* is correct, the ruling of the Madras Government appears to me to be a case of perverted judgment, and a gross interference with the private liberty of its servants. If it is intended merely as an attack upon khadi or the All-India Spinners' Association, I have no doubt that both will survive the shock. And if it is an invitation to the All-India Spinners' Association to sever its connection with the Congress, I should be extremely sorry if I discovered that the Association had done anything to deserve such an invitation. The Association is proud of its being an integral part of the Congress organization, and it will deem it an honour and a privilege to work under the Congress banner, so long as that venerable national institution regards it as worthy of its patronage. But if by merely owning the parentage and patronage of the Congress an institution becomes a political association, the interpretation would involve most awkward consequences, which I hope no self-respecting Government servant will tolerate.

There are many schools for suppressed class children run in several provinces under the Congress aegis, and with Congress funds, to which Government servants also have been known to contribute without any secrecy. Was it wrong for them to do so? And are schools for 'untouchables' political bodies, because they are run with Congress funds and by Congressmen? Provincial Congress Committees have been known to open famine relief funds, and invite subscriptions to which Government servants have subscribed. Was it a breach of Government Servants' Conduct Rules? These relief committees were and the suppressed class committees are integral parts of the Congress organization. Are they,

therefore, political associations? The Congress may open hospitals as an integral part of the Congress organization and its activity. Will the hospitals therefore become political associations? Khadi is at the present moment an integral part of the Congress franchise. Is it a crime therefore for Government servants to wear it? Is it not possible for the Congress to have its political, its social, its moral, its economic, medical, sociological and such other departments, all integral parts of that organization, and yet wholly self-governing and wholly independent each of the others? Every Congressman regrets that the Congress, although among all the national bodies it is the most influential and the most important, is not yet able to command men and money enough to organize every department of national life. But as time goes on, and as it is able to draw to it men of the right stamp, as well as money, it will certainly touch every part of our national life. It would be ridiculous then to say that all its non-political activities became tainted with politics, and were therefore taboo to the Government servants. And if the Government dared to issue such a boycott, it would prove to be its own death warrant.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that the Congress is a long way off from attaining that height. But when it does, the Government will be absorbed by it, and there will be nobody to resent, resist, or interfere with the Congress influence. That the Government has been able—assuming that the information given in *The Hindu* is correct—to regard the All-India Spinners' Association as a political association, shows that the Congress influence is at a discount at the present moment, that the public voice is ineffective, and that therefore it is open for the Government to issue any ruling, no matter how insulting or how ridiculous it may be. I can only hope that there will be Government servants courageous enough to disregard this monstrous ruling and openly help the Spinners' Association which in spite of the Government order, I submit, is entirely a non-political body, and was in so many words intended by the Congress to be and to remain, for the reasons stated in the resolution which brought the Association into being. Here are the words of the resolution which is part of the constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association:

Whereas the time has arrived for the establishment of an expert organization for the development of hand-spinning and khaddar, and whereas experience has shown that such development is not possible without a permanent organization, *unaffected and uncontrolled by politics, by political changes or political bodies*, an organization called the All-India

Spinners' Association is hereby established with the consent of the All-India Congress Committee, as an integral part of the Congress organization, but *with independent existence and powers.*

Two things stand out unequivocal and emphatic in this preamble, namely, that it is unaffected and uncontrolled by politics, political changes, or political bodies, and that it has an independent existence and powers. How such an association could be called a political association, simply because it is an integral part of the Congress, and also because like a bank it has accepted the agency of the Congress for the collection of yarn subscription, passes comprehension. But acts of governments are often incomprehensible. It would have been more honest, if the reported action of the Madras Government had taken the form of a straight order to its servants to have nothing to do with the All-India Spinners' Association on the simple and intelligible ground, that it does not like the penetration of the charkha into the villages and the consequent progress of khadi and all that it means.

Young India, 7-7-1927

112. WORK BEFORE PINJRAPOLES

Sjt. Y. M. Parnerkar, whose services have been engaged on behalf of the All-India Cow-protection Association, has sent me notes of his impressions gathered from his visit to Kathiawar where he went in search of good cows. In the hope that his plea for the expansion of pinjrapoles into model dairies and cattle-breeding farms on a moderate scale and under skilled management will not fall upon deaf ears, I condense them below.

One thing that strikes most a lover of cattle when he visits Kathiawar, the home of the well-known *Gir* animals, is the enormous number of charitable institutions, run as retiring places for disabled cattle, chiefly cows. They are known as pinjrapoles. When they were first started there was not the deep poverty that faces us today. It was then a matter of little importance, whether they were economically managed or not. But today the condition is altered. No such institution can now hope for long to stand well, unless it is put on a sound financial basis. The longevity of pinjrapoles could only be guaranteed if they became self-supporting. It was found that nearly eight lakhs of rupees per year were spent as recurring expenses only in Kathiawar on these institu-

tions. Yet it is difficult, if not impossible, to secure even a few good cows in a home for the best milk-producing cow in all India. This tract, once overflowing with milk, produces now hardly any pure and hygienic cow's milk. The once warlike race of Kathis is now deteriorating for want of proper nourishment, notwithstanding plentiful grazing facilities for cattle-breeding. Bullocks for agricultural labour are imported by the cultivators from outside. The buffalo is overpowering the cow in the production of milk and ghee, and so driving her off the stage. Time has come for the best brains of the country to take up this very important problem.

There can be no two opinions on the point that the duty of the *gosevak* does not end with merely saving the cow from the butcher's knife, but he has to stop the deterioration and try to raise the standard of milk production. It could be said that the surest way of saving the cow from going to the slaughter-house is to make it so expensive that the butcher cannot afford to purchase it. This could only be done, when the cow finds a good place among the paying heads in a dairyman's or a cattle-breeder's ledger. The productive power of an average Indian cow has gone down so low that it is difficult for a business man to take up the work. The problem has therefore to be handled on a religious or national basis.

The work can be accomplished by the existing pinjrapoles. They have capital, buildings, and above all, public sympathy. What is needed is good management and enterprise. When a pinjrapole maintains about 100 or 200 retired cattle, it can add a few good cows that will support themselves and leave a margin for the other heads. If the cows are well kept, regularly bred to good bulls, and the calves well cared for, during a short period these should become places where the dairyman can purchase his foundation stock, the agriculturist may get his draft cattle, the fancy cattle-keeper the use of a good bull, the needy man his sick animals well treated, the ignorant cow-owner guidance in the best way of maintaining his live-stock, and what is more important, all from the child in the cradle to the old man on the deathbed may get pure milk and its nourishing products at a moderate rate.

Young India, 7-7-1927

113. AGES-OLD PROBLEM

A sannyasi from Almora writes as follows:

In replying to a correspondent, you have said in *Young India* of 14th April last that, even if you were attacked by a snake, you would not wish to kill it.¹ In my opinion, this would be improper; for in the first place, you would be thereby killing yourself, and secondly, by letting such a venomous reptile free, you would be instrumental in causing injury to others. Take another instance. If the owner of a house, in which a snake has entered, removed the snake without killing it from his house, it is sure to enter some other house and injure its inmates. Surely, the responsibility for the injury, it may be fatal, to the inmates of the other house, done by the snake that was let off, will be on the head of him who has under a false notion of pity let the snake off. There are many other reptiles, beasts and insects who injure human beings or spread disease. Surely, if the destruction of this life be considered *himsa*, then it is infinitely less than the destruction wrought by these creatures. Let it be granted that when a man kills for his own sake, it is *himsa*; but it cannot be when destruction is resorted to for the sake of saving many other precious lives. After all, the quality of an act is determined by the motive prompting it, and when the motive for destruction is the higher good, such destruction becomes a duty and ceases to be *himsa*. I would like you to answer this argument in the pages of *Young India*.

The Sannyasi's argument is ages old. There is no doubt that there is very considerable force in it. Had it not been so, destruction would not have gone on as it has from ancient times. Few men are wantonly wicked. The most heinous and the most cruel crimes of which history has record have been committed under cover of religion or equally other noble motive. But in my opinion, we are no better off for the destruction that has gone on even under the highest sanction, that is, of religion. No doubt destruction in some form or other of some life is inevitable. Life lives upon life. Hence only is the highest bliss attainable ascribed by seers to a state, in which life is possible without the necessity of a perishable case, for whose sustenance destruction becomes at all necessary. And it is possible for man whilst in the body to hope to attain that state, only if he confines himself to the least

¹ *Vide* Vol. XXXIII, pp. 233-4.

possible destruction, such as is caused in his taking of vegetable life. The freer he is, consciously and deliberately, from the necessity of living upon the destruction of other life, the nearer he is to Truth and God. That all mankind is not likely to accept what may appear to be an unattractive existence does not affect the validity of my argument. Men, who lead this life of utter selflessness and of pity for the meanest creature that lives, enable us to understand the power of God, and serve as leaven to lift up humanity, and light its path towards its goal. We have no right to destroy life that we cannot create. It seems to me to be atheistical to think that God has created some life only to be destroyed by man, either for his pleasure or for sustaining a body, which he knows, is after all doomed to death any moment. We do not know what part the many so-called noxious creatures play in the economy of Nature. We shall never know the laws of Nature by destruction. We have records of men, whose love has travelled beyond their kind, living in perfect safety even in the midst of ferocious beasts. There seems to be so much affinity between all life, that tigers, lions and snakes have refrained from harming men, who have shed all fear of them and will approach them as friends.

The argument that if I do not destroy a snake known to be venomous, he will cause the death of many men and women is deceptive. It is no part of my duty to set about seeking out all the venomous creatures and destroying them. Nor need I take it for granted, that if I do not destroy a snake I encounter, it is bound to bite the next passer-by. I must not be the judge between the snake and my neighbours. I have sufficiently discharged my duty to my neighbours if I do unto them as I would that they should do unto me, and if I do not expose them to any greater risk than I do myself, and if I do not better my own condition in any way whatsoever at their expense. I may not therefore leave the snake in my neighbour's compound as is very often done. The utmost I can do is to leave the reptile as much out of harm's way as possible, and warn my neighbours about its appearance in the neighbourhood and its disposal by me. I am aware that this is no comfort for my neighbours, nor any protection; but we are living in the midst of death, trying to grope our way to Truth. Perhaps it is as well that we are beset with danger at every point in our life; for, in spite of our knowledge of the danger and of our precarious existence, our indifference to the Source of all life is excelled only by our amazing arrogance.

I am not satisfied with the answer given to the sannyasi. His letter, which is written in Hindi, shows that my correspondent

is himself a fellow seeker after Truth. Hence only have I felt the call to answer his query in public. My own position is pitiable. My intellect rebels against the destruction of any life in any shape whatsoever. But my heart is not strong enough to befriend those creatures which experience has shown are destructive. The language of convincing confidence, which comes from actual experience, fails me, and it will continue to be so, so long as I am cowardly enough to fear snakes, tigers and the like. I have entered upon the reply with the greatest diffidence. But I felt that it would be wrong not to declare my belief for fear of losing caste and being regarded as a dangerous animal myself. I was once so regarded by friends in South Africa. We were all sitting at a table, and discussion turned upon the very topic I have here discussed. They were English missionary friends. They did not mind my views about transmigration, cow-protection, vegetarianism, though they all appeared to be very crude to them. But they could not help betraying their disgust, which was written in their faces, when I said that I would not, if God gave me the courage, kill a snake,¹ even if I knew that not to kill would be certain death for me. Disgust was hidden by the suppressed laughter which accompanied, "O! You are a dangerous man then!"

Young India, 7-7-1927

114. LETTER TO B. F. BHARUCHA

[After July 7, 1927]²

I have your letters. I shall now reply to them as far as I can; but for a completely satisfactory reply you must run down here, as you usually do. Take it that the replies I give are for your benefit only. If, however, you wire me asking for my permission to publish my replies, I am not going to decline it; just the same I should like to say that you have committed a blunder in publishing my last letter³. I had not written either to disturb the satyagrahis or to check them, but merely for your information and as a warning to you. When you solicited my permission, I thought you approved the substance of my letter and that you intended to stop the struggle and therefore you wanted to make use of my

¹ *Vide* also Vol. XXIX, pp. 202-3.

² The source has this letter after the entries for July 7, 1927.

³ *Vide* "Letter to B. F. Bharucha", before 2-7-1927.

letter. Instead, you did just the opposite. If you had not understood my reply or if you did not approve of it there was absolutely no need to communicate it to the satyagrahis. I cannot understand how and why a rift was created among them. But it is no use crying over spilt milk.

Now that's all over. But I must say this: It is your duty and of other friends who regard the Nagpur struggle as a satyagraha to continue it. If you must have the sanction of the Congress, you must strongly refute my views and obtain its sanction. And know that I am not going to take it amiss if you do so. And if you obtain the sanction of the Congress I shall not be sorry; instead, I shall congratulate you. But let me strike a note of caution that before you do anything, make sure that you have correctly understood my views. The answers to your other questions are as follows:

1. It was not my duty to offer unsolicited criticism of the Nagpur satyagraha.
2. I did not think it proper to say anything beyond refuting what Awari¹ had written about my approval.
3. I do not understand on what matter I should have consulted Bhai Awari.
4. How do you hold me responsible for the resolutions that came up in the All-India Congress Committee? I had nothing to do with them. I do happen to be a member of the Working Committee, but my condition is that my presence should not be expected in any committee. If you ask me why I should agree to be on the Committee when I attend none of its meetings I must admit I have no defence or if I have any the President would be able to put it forward.
5. Now you will know that I had no hand in appointing Vallabhbhai; in fact the latter had told me that he had no idea of it. He could not disregard the Committee's insistence. Do you not yourself claim as much as Vallabhbhai does to understand my principles? But if I am to decide whose claim is stronger I can do so only at the time of my death, because how can I tell right today to what extent Vallabhbhai or you will be able to follow my ideas at some critical moment? But assuming that I myself were present at the Committee [meeting] and were against [the use of] arms, I would nevertheless find no inconsistency if I went to Nagpur at the Committee's insistence. I would go, explain my ideas and after having known the facts, make a report. If someone

¹ Manchershaw Awari

can convince me that resorting to arms can come within the scope of satyagraha should I not let him do so? How can one pronounce judgment without knowing the facts? Then if you would ask me why I wrote that letter to you, let me tell you that it is a common practice for friends to exchange ideas, that it is only rational to be willing to modify one's own ideas in the process, if possible. For instance today I do believe that God exists but I do not refuse to listen to the agnostics.

7. Won't you now agree that the answer to your seventh question is included in my answer to your sixth¹? If you do not, then let me know so that I shall find time and answer it again.

8. I think this too is covered by my answers to the earlier questions.

9. When you say that the calm atmosphere necessary for satyagraha is not there, you make an observation applying to the whole of India. But there are a number of other conditions for satyagraha and when I talked of the general atmosphere in the country, you sought to limit your view to the local atmosphere. Here again you misunderstand my article².

10. If I tell the Congress President who has proffered help that a certain satyagraha is no satyagraha, although you are associated with it, what is there to be embarrassed about? Certainly you are no stranger to the well-known dictum: "There are as many ideas as there are heads."

11. I have a number of other ideas which the [Congress] President, Patel, Bharucha, Mahadev and Ba do not know and even I myself do not know. Do not therefore be unhappy when you come across some of my hitherto unknown ideas. And whatever regrets I felt on account of your support, I withdraw so that I may relieve you of yours.

12. I do want swaraj.

13. There is absolute need of self-protection.

14. For that my weapon is satyagraha. Because I realized the futility of weapons fashioned out of such gross material as wood, iron, electricity, etc., I invented the invisible substance of satyagraha and sought refuge in it. But that does not mean that everyone should have recourse to the same invisible weapon. Others may well obtain swaraj and defend it with arms.

In my scheme of swaraj there is a place for such weapons too, but it is of no use to me, as it cannot go with satyagraha.

¹ Answer to Question 6 is missing.

² *Vide* Vol. XXXIII, "Nagpur Satyagraha", 19-5-1927,

15. I think the answer to this question is covered by my answer to the fourteenth question.

16. The answer to this question too is practically covered by my answer to the fourteenth but, for the sake of clarity, I would say that those who do not understand satyagraha or in spite of their understanding it cannot digest it, will definitely take up material weapons and they have a right to do so. The State will have to provide training for it.

You ask to be excused for your long article. Now this is violence like the Western practice of deliberately committing an offence and then seeking to get out of it by formal apology. If you must apologize for writing a long letter, why write one at all? But you wrote it all the same and also apologized. We are at present under Western domination. Submitting to your violence, therefore, I forgive you because my satyagraha is none the worse for it. If you feel sorry you will not be excused; not only that but I shall have to launch satyagraha against you. If you can convey my message to Awari, send him word to eat, drink and be merry. His going to the jail has not pained me in the least. I regard him as a man of courage. But I also know that he is immature. There is no limit to his goodness as to his stubbornness. I put up with his lack of understanding and his haughtiness and praise his goodness, his courage and his patriotism.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

115. *SPEECH TO ADI KARNATAKA BOYS, BANGALORE*¹

Before July 8, 1927

The students of the Bangalore State Hostel for *Adi Karnataka* Boys were brought over the other day to Kumara Park by Sjt. Shankarnarayan Rao . . . [Gandhiji was told:] "We have 145 boys now, but propose to take in more by cutting down Re. 1 monthly that is given them as pocket money. But the boys are opposed to the proposal." . . . Gandhiji who was requested to address a few words of advice immediately laid his finger thereon and said:

I was distressed, my boys, to find that you were forgetting your simple habits, and were reluctant to part with your pocket money for the sake of your brethren. I assure you that my father

¹ From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

gave me no pocket money, and in no other part of India boys of the middle class are treated like you. But the State does not house and feed and educate you in order that you may learn idleness and forget simplicity and self-help. You must learn to wash your own clothes, cook your own food, and do all your work yourselves. And may I tell you? As I look at you I feel as though you were all foreigners. Can you tell me why?

The best amongst the students immediately answered: "Because we are wearing foreign cloth."

That is very good. Now there is no reason why you should not be wearing khadi, every one of you. I tell you I could give you for one-fourth the price much cleaner caps than you are wearing now. The circumstance that your superiors or your teachers do not wear khadi need not deter you. You will not drink liquor, or eat beef or carrion, because your parents or other *Adi Karnatakas* do so. You will on the contrary give up all these things, and insist on your Superintendent providing you with khadi clothes, telling him that in case they are dear you would gladly curtail part of your cloth rations. You must know that there are in the country millions of children who do not get the education that you get, who do not get not only the pocket money you get, but not even enough food that your pocket money could buy them. I want you for their sake to wear khadi and to learn to spin. Go to the Exhibition and see what it has to teach you.

Young India, 14-7-1927

116. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 8, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letters. There seems to be one missing still. Absence of further telegraphic news from you I take to mean good news.

Do stay as long as you wish and certainly till you are quite restored to health. Health must be kept.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5246. Courtesy: Mirabehn

117. *SPEECH AT KHADI EXHIBITION, BANGALORE¹*

July 8, 1927

Distribution of prizes over, amidst an impressive silence, Mahatmaji spoke as follows:

FRIENDS,

Perhaps the best demonstration that you can all give of your interest in these proceedings is as soon as this function is over for you to proceed to the Exhibition Court and empty the stalls. Rajagopalachari read to you the figures of six days' sale with some degree of pride and satisfaction. I must confess to you that when I think of your own capacity, eight thousand rupees' purchase brings no satisfaction whatsoever to me. When in my imagination I picture to myself so many shops, cloth shops in Bangalore and when I look at the dresses that most men and women in Bangalore wear, eight thousand rupees seem to me to be a mere flea-bite. But khadi workers know their difficulties. They realize every moment of the progress of this movement how uphill the task is and so when compared to their experience of khadi exhibitions elsewhere, they find a little rise in the sale-barometer, they derive satisfaction. Such really is the kind of satisfaction that Rajagopalachari has derived. But I felt it would be wrong on my part if I did not draw the attention of you all who are living in this beautiful land to the work that lies before you, if you will do it.

Ours is not a city civilization and if there are any dreamers who think that some day or other we shall implant on our soil the city civilization of the West, being a dreamer of a type myself, I warn the dreamers against the slightest hope in our own generation and for some generations at least to come of such dreams being realized. Just think for one moment what our country is: 700,000 villages, in a vast continent, 1,900 miles long, 1,500 miles broad, and these villages even according to Western pandits handed down to us from times immemorial. America is a new continent. They have millions of acres of land lying absolutely fallow and a sparse population. There were no villages when the people from old England went to America, when Columbus went to America, not of the type you find here, and they brought into being a new civilization. It may be that it is the most per-

¹ At its closing ceremony; the Exhibition began on July 3.

fect of its kind for that soil, but what is good for the virgin soil of America need not, cannot, in my opinion is not, good for this ancient soil, watered by its mighty rivers, protected by the highest mountain peaks, and inhabited by people, the most conservative on the face of the globe, having traditions of their own, habits and customs which cannot be eradicated on the spur of the moment. Then I say that if you think that you will import the city civilization from the West and eradicate your villages you can do so on one condition, the condition of Chengizkhan, fabled in history. I do not know what Chengizkhan did or did not do. But if history gives [the truth] about him then I know that before you can implant the civilization from America onto this soil you will require at least several hundred Chengizkhans who will mercilessly kill off the villagers, pick out the sturdiest men and women whom these Chengizkhans can bend to their iron brutal will and use the human species as if they were so many brutes and beasts, then indeed such a dream can be realized. But if you want to keep your villages intact, if you want to assimilate the best that we may learn from the West, then indeed here is work enough for you, to men and women in Bangalore and Mysore and Karnataka, the Southern Peninsula and the few who have come from the North also.

I do not know whether you have been touched as I have been by the sight of these prize-winners who do not know the distinctions between Brahmin and non-Brahmin, Hindus and Mussalmans, rich and poor. They have also one thing in common, namely, the poverty of this land and those who belong to rich families have cast in their lot with those who are the poorest in front of us. I do not know whether you take the same interest, whether you have the same knowledge that you have of racing language. If in this assembly representing the poorest of India, if in spite of these you had prize-winners from the football ground, racing ground or the cricket field, I know what some of you will feel, I know how enthusiastic you will feel. But I do not know that you understand the language of spinners and carders. I do not know whether in spite of your having gone to the Exhibition you really understand the hidden meaning of these processes. If you do, then I know that you will have the same feeling that is welling up in my breast at this moment, when I feel impelled to speak out my mind to you in spite of my weak health.

At this stage Mahatmaji was visibly moved and there were tears in his eyes. He paused for a few minutes. . . .

I pray to God that He may give you strength and wisdom to understand the meaning of this Exhibition and this demonstration.

I have not many more words to say and you will forgive me if you find me breaking down in the midst of my delivery of the message to you. I am really too full of this thing and it is difficult in spite of the ability I too possess to control myself and to hide my feelings and speak to you purely the common language of reason. But sometimes emotion and sentiments overpower me and I wish God gave me the power that I daily yearn for to open out my heart to you so that you can read not the language that tongue can speak but the language that the heart can speak. May God bless you and may God bless the prize-winners and may He bless this function. I thank you all for attending.

The Hindu, 9-7-1927

118. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 9, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter after the wire. You must have received my usual weekly letter. I sent also a postcard to Wardha but that was merely to tell you that I had sent the main letter to Sabarmati. I am glad you decided to stay on and to get the doctor's report. If we knew all the laws of nature or having known, had the power to obey them in thought, word and deed, we would be God Himself and not need to do anything at all. As it is, we hardly know the laws and have little power to obey them. Hence disease and all its effects. It is, therefore, enough for us to realize that every illness is but a breach of some unknown law of nature and to strive to know the laws and pray for power to obey. Heart prayer, therefore, whilst we are ill, is both work and medicine.

I went through another day's strain yesterday and stood it extremely well, better even than last Sunday. I am in no hurry to have your Hindi letters.

With love,

BAPU

119. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

July 9, 1927

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Your letter. A broken bottle may somehow be held together but can it ever regain the quality of unbreakability that might have been ascribed to it by its owner? I have not yet got over the shock of your fall.¹ You do not know how I have sworn by you. You were among the very few of my unbreakables.

But I must bury the past. I shall try. Whether you should return to the Mahavidyalaya or not I do not know. Let Kripalani judge. The blow was so stunning that I did not think it fit to write to Kripalani or Nanabhai² nor have they said anything to me.

But it is quite clear that you may not now leave the Sind show without ample notice to Thadani. Your repentance is good and proper. Nothing however need be done in haste now. Please keep yourself in touch with me. Discuss your repentance with your wife and mother-in-law. Let them too realize what the return means.

I am here for some time yet.

Yours,
BAFU

From a photostat: G.N. 876

120. SPEECH AT AMATEUR DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION, MYSORE³

[July 9, 1927]⁴

The week began with Gandhiji's attendance at the special dramatic performance—"Kabir"—organized by the Amateur Dramatic Association of Pandit Taranath. . . . The whole idea was to popularize Hindi and khadi. Whilst, therefore, Gandhiji summed up his criticism in just one phrase,—“Kabir in a modernized form”,—he paid to all concerned a tribute of praise which

¹ Vide "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 26-6-1927.

² Nrisinhaprasad (Nanabhai) Kalidas Bhatt who was at the time the *Kulanayak* (Vice-Chancellor) of the Gujarat Vidyapith

³ From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

⁴ According to Mahadev Desai's Diary

was well deserved. He thanked them for the threefold pleasure of "having given to the self-appointed representative of *Daridranarayana* a purse not to be counted", of listening in South India to "Hindi exquisitely pronounced and rendered" and of seeing the majority of actors dressed in khadi, and said:

The actors have realized the pain I feel when I do not see a single countryman of mine in khadi, be he a prince or a peasant, a lawyer, a doctor or a business man, be the person a man or woman, belonging to the highest or the lowest strata of society. I am hoping for a day when all will follow this common dharma of our motherland, and I hope that what has been acted will be translated into life by the actors and be a permanent part of them and us. I assure you that among the pleasant recollections that I shall carry with me, if God permits me to leave Karnataka alive, the memory of this evening will not be the least pleasant.

Young India, 21-7-1927

121. TWO SCALES

Writing about a girl, who had been married by her thoughtless parents while she was still a child and had never come to know her husband, and who had later become "a widow", I had expressed the view that I would not regard her as married at all, and that, apart from the question whether she should be regarded as married or not, it was the duty of her parents to get her married again.

Reading about this view in newspapers, a gentleman has written a long letter to me in Hindi to the following effect:

The reasons which you advance to justify the remarriage of child-widows will also apply to other widows. Would you, then, encourage all widows to remarry? I would urge that we should prohibit even widowers from remarrying and should not in any case permit widows to remarry.

Men have committed through the ages a great many sins with the help of arguments such as these. I have come across meat-eaters who argue that, since man is obliged to eat meat in the region of the North Pole where the land is snow-bound all through the year, it is not sinful to eat meat in this country too, despite the heat here.

We easily find arguments to justify sinful practices. Widowers will not refrain from remarrying, but under cover of the argument that they should, we are urged to withhold justice from

widows. Those who have made us unfit for swaraj now tell us: "You will get swaraj when you are fit for it." We who have suppressed and degraded the untouchables say: "Let them reform themselves and then mix with us."

Like a dishonest Vania, men keep two scales, one for buying and another for selling things with. They feel their own weaknesses, huge as hills, to be as small as mustard seed and regard the weaknesses of others, small like grains, to be as big as hills.

If men use reason, they will see that they have no right to suppress widows. Enforced widowhood is not virtue but sin. It covers up a disease which breaks out with the opportunity for contact with a man. If a grown-up woman who has become a widow does not even feel the desire to remarry, she deserves to be revered by the whole world, she is a pillar of dharma. But one who wishes to remarry and refrains from doing so out of fear of society or is restrained by law, has already remarried in thought. She deserves not reverence but compassion and should be free to remarry. In former times she was free. Following custom slavishly, so-called high-caste Hindus turned this voluntary dharma into a law and introduced coercion in dharma.

Justice required that, so long as widowers have the right to remarry, widows too should have it. Certain restrictions are necessary for the protection of society, but they should be the same for both men and women and should command the willing consent of all thinking women as of all thinking men.

We should not forget the difference between child-widows and other widows. It is the duty of parents and of society to get the former married again, but they have no such duty towards other widows. In their case, all that is necessary is to remove the present restraint enforced by custom or law. In other words, if such widows wish to remarry they should be free to do so.

The only restraint over the remarriage of grown-up widowers and widows can be that exercised by public opinion. That public opinion is now flowing in the opposite direction. Where, however, respect for dharma, discipline and self-control is widespread, very few men and women will violate them. As things are, people who respect them are exceptions rather than the rule. A rich old man of sixty feels no shame in marrying a girl of ten or twelve, the marriage being the third in his life, and society tolerates this. When on the other hand, a helpless widow of twenty wishes to remarry because she cannot observe self-control, des-

pite her efforts, she is despised by society. This is not dharma but *adharma*¹.

It is useless and irrelevant to point to immorality and like evils prevailing in other countries as an argument against the removal of this coercion, this *adharma*. Even if all widows, from child-widows to widows of sixty, were as pure as the immaculate Sita, I would say that if any of them wanted to remarry nobody had the right to stop them from doing so. Society may plead with them with love, but it has no right to restrain them by force.

If we apply to others the yardstick which we use for ourselves, the world would be freed of the threefold suffering and dharma would prevail once again.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-7-1927

122. A LETTER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 10, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for sending the copies of resolutions passed at the public meeting of the Mussalmans of the Ambala city on the first instant. In your letter you have specially invited my attention to Resolution No. 5 and requested immediate action. Perhaps you are unaware that I have recently gone through a very serious illness and that I am still lying on a convalescent bed and that I am under medical orders not to undertake much activity. I read no North Indian newspapers at all. The only paper I may be said to read is *The Hindu* of Madras, and I cast an occasional glance at a Bombay English daily. This gives me no information about what is in the Hindu papers. I have seen in these papers no offensive reference to the Prophet or Islam or the Muslims. If you have Press cuttings containing the references complained of in Resolution No. 5, I would thank you to send them if only as a loan if necessary. I shall undertake to study them and return them after perusal. I will certainly give my opinion upon them. So far as the judgment² in the *Rangila Rasul*³ case is concerned, you

¹ The opposite of dharma

² *Vide* "Letter to M. Abdul Gani", 11-8-1927.

³ An Urdu pamphlet

will permit me to say that the whole of the agitation in respect of it is unfortunate and unjustified. I do not seek to justify the judgment but all that is said against Justice Dilip Singh is in my opinion highly improper. If he has misread the law, as he well might have, the remedy is not a condemnation of the Judge as a man but the true remedy is to appeal against the judgment or if the law itself is defective to agitate for its amendment.

I am no defender of the author of *Rangila Rasul*. It may be a new thing to you. I had the opportunity of reading that pamphlet some years ago, and I commented upon it very severely in the columns of *Young India*.¹ Probably you do not know this fact. You may not also know that the author of *Rangila Rasul* is not the only misguided mischief-maker. I have seen Muslim writings just as offensive as *Rangila Rasul*. So far as I am aware there is nothing to choose between this class of writers, whether Hindu or Mussalman, and both are equally worthy of condemnation. But the remedy against this evil, so far as I am concerned, is not through a court of law, certainly not through violence, but through cultivation of healthy Hindu-Muslim opinion which will make the publication of sheets inflaming religious passions against one another an impossibility. But I am aware that my views are just now out of fashion. I, therefore, hold my silence so far as it is possible to do so. I could not ignore your letter, and delicate though my health is, I felt that I should send you a fairly full reply which I have done as lover of, and believer in, Hindu-Muslim unity and as your friend and brother if it is possible for you so to regard me. I have not written this letter for publication but it is written for you to share it with those who may wish to know my opinion and who desire to promote Hindu-Muslim unity. I have no desire to be drawn into a newspaper controversy or even into a profitless discussion by correspondence. If my letter makes no appeal to your reason I would urge you to dismiss it from your mind and throw it into the waste-paper basket. For your information I may tell you that I am no longer a Bar-at-Law. I am a poor scavenger and spinner.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 12384

¹ *Vide* Vol. XXIV, pp. 261 and 365-6; also Vol. XXXV.

123. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 10, 1927

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

I sent you a telegram yesterday in reply to your letter to Mahadev. I have purposely refrained hitherto from writing to you anything about Malkani. He wrote to me announcing his resignation.¹ It very nearly broke me to pieces. For, I regarded Malkani to be one of my unbreakables.² What would happen to the Vidyapith did not affect me but that a man had fallen shook me to the marrow. It is good that he has repented but you will be entirely justified in not taking him back. For his part, it would be another wrong if he left Thadani as unceremoniously as he left us. His wanting to be taken back, therefore, after three months or earlier if Thadani can spare him appears to me quite justified. That if he is truly repentant he must not remain at the Sind College permanently, I have no doubt. For must he feel hurt if he cannot be accepted by you. You will, therefore, come to a decision upon his letter solely from the point of view of the Mahavidyalaya. And if you think that the other professors would rather not have him I would not press for his reinstatement. It would embarrass him and it would put out the dissenting professors. If you therefore decide to have him, there should be a whole-hearted unanimity.

Yes. I have been getting some information about the new Vinayamandir. I was delighted to find so good an attendance. I did not expect that response. I hope that it would be a progressive success and that those who are responsible for its creation would never desert it, whether it continues to draw a large number of students or whether it declines.

I wish you would have a radical operation for piles if Dr. Dalal is now ready.

Kikibehn continues to favour me with a little letter from time to time.

¹ Vide "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 26-6-1927.

² Vide "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 9-7-1927.

You are not to expect me there before October as far as I can judge at present.

Yours sincerely,

ACHARYA KRIPALANI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

From a photostat: S.N. 12603

124. *SPEECH AT ALL-KARNATAKA HINDI CONFERENCE,
BANGALORE¹*

July 10, 1927

The All-Karnataka Hindi Sammelan held its session this afternoon at the Majestic Theatre before a vast concourse of people. . . . At about 3 p.m. Mahatmaji arrived and conducted the proceedings of the day. . . . He then distributed the diplomas to the successful candidates at the last Hindi examination, one of whom was a lady who had obtained a I Class. After distribution of prizes Mahatmaji, before speaking in Hindi, wanted to know how many would like the speech to be in English. The audience to a man raised their hands and Mahatmaji smiling next asked them by the same means to signify whether they wanted Kanarese translation to which also there was assent even from the ladies' gallery. He then spoke in Hindi and his speech was translated to the audience by Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande. After dealing with the usefulness of the movement, Mahatmaji [said:]²

India is divided into two parts today, and the portion north of the Vindhya has no heart relations with the southern portions. It is the duty of the South to learn the language of the North which is far larger. When I find it easy to travel from Sind to Bengal with the little bit of my knowledge of Hindi, it is impossible in these parts to get along without English. Unless you learn Hindi, you will not break through the Vindhya that stands between the South and the North. I do not want you to ignore your vernaculars—you may be as proud of them as I am of mine—but if we would be Indians and not merely Gujaratis, Bengalis, Tamilians or Karnatakas, we ought to learn Hindi. It is not difficult to learn. Those who have learnt it have not taken more than

¹ This was the first All-Karnataka Hindi Conference. It began on July 9 and ended on July 10. Gandhiji attended this Conference on the last day.

² This paragraph has been taken from *The Hindu*, 12-7-1927.

six months studying two hours a week. I appeal to you to devote that brief period to the service of the motherland.

Different from the question of a lingua franca is that of a common script. Whereas knowledge of Hindi enables you to come in contact with people of the North and send out your hearts to them, adoption on your part of Devanagari as the script for your vernaculars enables the people in the North to come in close contact with you.

Now is the question of funds. I am glad that South India has begun to contribute towards the expenses of the Prachar. But a yearly expenditure of Rs. 10,000 is necessary for the work, and I appeal to you to find that amount from South India.

Young India, 21-7-1927

125. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*July 10, 1927*]¹

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. You will follow the doctor's directions accurately. There need be no hurry about Wardha. You can do your Hindi just as well there. No Wardha until you feel quite free and secure. Dr. Harilal Desai is quite a sound man and very careful.

Do not strain yourself to write to me in Hindi. By all means do, whenever you feel like it. You will use the mosquito-net without any hesitation. Do not be in a hurry to move about quickly.

I had another meeting today, this time for Hindi. I stood it quite well.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5245. Courtesy: Mirabehn

¹ From the reference in the last paragraph to the Hindi Conference; *vide* the preceding item.

126. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 11, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

No letter from you today but there is your welcome telegram which is more than a letter because it gives me news to-day. What an important part regularity of bowels plays in one's system? It is clear too that frequent fasting for purely health reasons is a desirable thing. But I do not need to emphasize the point with you.

My address up to 16th August is Bangalore. I shall be going out now and again for a day or two. But Bangalore is to be headquarters till the 16th August.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5248. Courtesy: Mirabehn

127. LETTER TO GOPALRAO

Silence Day, July 11, 1927

Your letter. You will, of course, have to consider what Kaka-saheb says.

You want to enjoy the full bliss of *brahmacharya* immediately but this cannot be done. If you are content with forgoing marriage then do not marry. If not, make arrangements for getting married. You are no stranger to the difference between contentment and bliss.

The idea of merging into each other if you find an ideal wife is itself a great illusion. Many have been deluded by it and it will be no wonder if you too are lost. If you will escape it till the end, that would be a matter for wonder.

Having seen us all married people, if you are convinced that it is not worth while following suit—and convinced you ought to be—give up for the present the desire to taste the joy of *brahmacharya* and ponder over the joylessness of marriage, if you have observed it. Continue to think on this line—‘God alone knows what bliss there is to be enjoyed in *brahmacharya*, but because there is no joy in marriage, I am not going to marry at all.’

Here is an argument on a lower level:

'I would not say I don't want to marry. Indeed, under certain circumstances I may marry. But today my country is in bondage; plight of the women is miserable. As I am engaged in this work, how can I marry? I must take this vow that until we attain the swaraj of my conception, I shall not marry even if Rambha¹ were to solicit me.' Try to think in this way if you can. Formulate your definition of swaraj. I suggest a simple one: 'The day when the spinning-wheel spreads throughout India and there is complete boycott of foreign cloth.' If you find this hard to work upon, write out one you like and vow not to marry until that is attained and put up a copy in your room where everyone can see it. Send one to Kakasaheb and one to me.

If you can do neither try this thought: 'I do have a desire to marry and it cannot be suppressed. But I will not marry a girl of my caste as I would not marry my own sister. I will insist on breaking the barriers of caste. The girl must know Sanskrit, Marathi, Hindi and Gujarati; she should not hanker after money; if her parents are alive we must have their consent. She must have absolute love of khadi; she must appreciate and have faith in my other ideals and love the untouchables, be strong of body and prepared to live in some remote village and be willing to honour the well-known discipline of *brahmacharya* in marriage.' If you cannot do even this, know that you will not be able to observe *brahmacharya* and therefore marry at the first opportunity. If you resolve to observe the above discipline, write down the vow and proceed as before.

But then what I have suggested to you is only the way of worshipping a Deity conceived with form and attributes. Observance of *brahmacharya* for the sake of attaining inviolate *brahmacharya* is like worshipping One without attributes. It is difficult for all of us.

I have pointed out to you the path that I myself took. I have just been tasting a droplet of the subtle bliss of *brahmacharya* from out of its physical advantages. My intellect has none the less realized its bliss but you should know all the same that I have not actually experienced it.

If anyone can truly describe what that bliss is, Vinoba, Surendranath and others, who, I believe, observe inviolate *brahmacharya*, may perhaps be able to. I could give you only a partial account of the [bliss of] *brahmacharya* which knows what sense-

¹ A celestial nymph

pleasures and marriage mean. Only the perfect can give a perfect account.

It is possible that you will not be satisfied by this too. If you would not find here the answer to your question you will now understand why it is so. Neither Kakasaheb nor I, in fact no one who has known married life, is competent to answer your question from personal experience. For these same reasons we, being embodied, are able to describe only partially the joy of *moksha*. Since there is no speech without a body, *moksha* is and will ever remain indescribable. Likewise, only an inviolate *brahmachari* can describe the path of pure *brahmacharya* or we should plod on in life, keeping in view the descriptions given by the Shastras.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

128. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

BANGALORE,
Monday, July 11, 1927

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I got your postcard. God provides man with a means to learn from his fall. You two have it through the birth of a son, but Moti, if she wills, can so use it as to fulfil the true end of her life. You are, moreover, a teacher by vocation. I shall wait and see how you bring up the child born to you. Let Moti read this.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Preserve this postcard.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12141

129. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

July 12, 1927

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

In the abstract, there can be no doubt that you have a right to wear whatever you like and to see or be seen by any friends you like. But when it comes to reducing an abstract right to concrete practice, innumerable things present themselves for consideration. And my advice is that in everything you do, you should possess confidence enough to bear down all opposition and to be able to convince everybody around you of the justice of your action. Do you reason with mother with the same frankness that you show in your letters to me? But let me give a concrete suggestion. Do you permit me to discuss your letter with both father and mother? Can I send them your last letter? I destroy all your letters after replying. The last one I am preserving till I receive your answer. From what I know of them and the manner in which they have brought up their children, it seems to me that they are most considerate, liberal-minded parents and will not interfere with the independence of their grown-up children. Your recent letters have therefore been a surprise to me. I therefore say nothing further just now and await your reply.

Meanwhile I ask you not to worry about things over which you may have no control. If you cannot have your way about your dress or choice of friends or dealings with them, know that there are many in the same condition in which you are, and that there is no person on this earth who has really got the liberty to do what he or she likes. Some restraint on liberty is demoralizing and some is uplifting. No restraint is demoralizing which one submits to, not out of fear, selfishness or the like, but out of consideration for, or affection for others. I cannot conceive your yielding to fear under any circumstance whatsoever.

I heard some very fine music yesterday. It went on for full one hour whilst I was spinning. I thought of your voice the whole of that time, and fine as both were yesterday, I observed that yours was in no way inferior, and to me, it even appeared to be superior. But that may be due to my partiality for you. Anyway you have a voice that would certainly sing away others' cares. Invoke it for dispelling your own.

With love,

BAPU

MISS RAIHANA TYABJI
SOUTHWOOD
MUSSOORIE
U.P.

From a photostat: S.N. 9604

130. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVEL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 12, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have carefully gone through the nine sides of your bank-note-size paper and I am not only none the wiser for it, but it has made confusion worse confounded. I do not yet know what Belgium and Switzerland are doing. I never told you¹ that the two colonies that I established in South Africa have failed. On the contrary, they succeeded as far as they went. I simply gave you the information in order to tell you that because those colonies succeeded to an extent, I could not draw the large deductions that you did from your untried plan.

For the Ashram, you have told me nothing new. And when you tell me that I must present something that will give in an hour what I promise in eight hours, we come to a standstill. I know no scheme that will give 300 millions of people two annas per hour. I have worked out your scheme to the best of my ability and it has failed me. Nor am I in a position to agree with you that it is possible to make something out of the modern craze for accumulation of wealth and destroying time and distance. Where, therefore, you see meeting-ground, I see absolutely none. Both your non-co-operation scheme and co-operation scheme appear to me to be unworkable and unintelligible. I cannot therefore give you room in the pages of *Young India*.

The certificates that you have secured from Sir Ashutosh and others make no impression upon me because I have always fought shy of certificates so much so that I destroyed what I used to hold myself. And as I feel that I have got the ability of testing schemes on their own merits, certificates are to me sometimes a hindrance and every time a superfluity.

¹ Vide "Letter to J. W. Petavel", 23-6-1927.

Before you can draw me to your scheme, two things are necessary. Show me something actually at work, and show me that it is capable of indefinite multiplication and yet producing the same results as I am doing for mine. I am showing my scheme at work in 1,500 villages and I can only wish that it was multiplied so as to reach 700 thousand and still the result will be constant. I want you to bear in mind that in corresponding with me you are corresponding with a practical man who has a horror of chimeras and who will not be dazzled by specious-looking things written or printed on paper.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14181

131. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Ashadh Sud 13 [July 12, 1927]¹

SISTERS,

Received your letter.

Manibehn will tell you how many women took part in the Exhibition, and what they did. Here it is enough to say that one of them was expert in keeping accounts while some others were equally expert in selling khaddar. They have received silver and gold medals. A blind woman spun exceedingly well at the Exhibition. She was the centre of attraction for all. One of the women was first in spinning fine, strong yarn and won a gold medal. Manibehn upheld the good name of the Ashram. Her carding drew the attention of all.

There was a Hindi Sammelan here. Here also one of the women was first. Some of the women here are making very good efforts to learn Hindi.

All this awakening is proceeding beautifully in this State. I have already written to you how some of the women here sing sweet *bhajans* at evening prayers too. On Saturday one of them played the vina for me. She herself composes the *bhajans*. They say she is very skilful in playing the vina.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3657

¹ The year is inferred from the reference to the Khadi Exhibition and the Hindi Sammelan held at Bangalore.

132. SPEECH TO MYSORE STUDENTS, BANGALORE

[July 12, 1927]¹

FRIENDS,

I thank God for being able to speak to you though in a low tone and for enabling me to speak to you in Hindi. You know perhaps that I speak with my friends in Hindi and in my own mother tongue Gujarati. I know however that in your schools and colleges and when you meet your friends and students you talk only in English. You have cultivated it as a habit and to me it appears it is a bad habit. I do not object to your learning English for the sake of acquiring knowledge or for the sake of earning your livelihood but I object to your giving so much importance to English and giving a low place to your national language, Hindi. I do not think it is right on your part to use in your conversation with your friends and relatives any other language than your national language or your mother tongue. Have love for your own language.

I have to make one request to my student friends. In the measure in which you learn English learn the national language and leave the glamour of the foreign tongue. I am grateful to you for this address presented to me in Hindi printed in Devanagari script. In order to serve our *Daridranarayana* in our land you have given me a purse and I am grateful to you all. You have all, in your love, collected so much for me but it is no wonder. Wherever I go I meet such sincere love and service from you students of India. That is your dharma, that is your duty. I ask why would you not help this fund? How much are you spending for your education and how many cities are there in the whole of Hindustan and how much money is being thrown away there? But do you know where those who live in cities get their money from? It is from the villages where there is only sorrow and where *Daridranarayana* lives. The money that you all spend for your education is all coming to you from your villages and you are being educated out of this sorrowful source. Twenty-five crores of rupees are going for the evils of the country as drink and can you who live in the cities, can you not give two pies for your poor

¹ From *Young India*, 21-7-1927 and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-7-1927

brothers and sisters in those villages? Let these two pies be your *prayaschitta*¹. Today, I see you all in foreign clothes and caps. Our sisters there are all in foreign cloth. Do not say they are made in Mysore, do not forget that the yarn is made outside your own country. Let me say this to you today. Go to the khadi depots and buy the caps for four annas or five annas and discard these costly caps and buy khadi and wear. That would be a service truly rendered.

Today we have lost the real significance of the term *vidyarthi*². In ancient days when all knew its meaning it stood for *brahmacharis* and *brahmacharinis* and it stood for *Brahmajnanam*³. It stood for *mukti*⁴, our own *mukti*, the *mukti* or liberty for the country, for the liberty of the individual. Today I ask you how many of you are true *brahmacharis* and *brahmacharinis*? Do you know anything about the controlling of the senses and training of the mind in the true path of *bhakti* and service? Do you know what our forefathers were doing? If you really know the duties of true *brahmacharis*, if you are really *vidyarthi*s in the real sense of the term, then there would not be the suffering in our land that we now see. Our ancient rishis⁵, pious maulvis⁶ and Christians have left us rich and precious treasures, to enjoy them and to become useful to others, whereby we must think of God every moment of our living life. We must leave off our coarse desires if we desire true *mukti*. I do not say that in youth you must all leave your amusements and pleasures and practise yoga, but I want that you recognize your duties, and do them as becomes real students and pupils of *Brahmajnanam*. The youths of today were not as the *brahmacharis* of old in health, they visit theatres, drink and eat wrong things and take pride in giving enjoyment to the senses. If your bodies are not strong your minds would also be affected and when your minds are affected you cannot have a knowledge of God and your duty. You cannot have the will-power to control yourself, you lose your vigour and energy and you become weak and slow. I have heard that some students take coffee as many as seven or eight times a day. I want my

¹ Expiation or atonement

² Student

³ Knowledge of the Ultimate

⁴ Freedom from phenomenal existence

⁵ Sages

⁶ Muslim scholars

young friends to remember I was also a student once. I ask them to answer me why they should not drink pure water or milk when they are thirsty and eat food when they are hungry? Why should they go on poisoning their bodies with all sorts of things? I hope you will see the true significance of what I say to you today. Think of the ideal of *brahmacharya*, ponder over it in your wisdom and act upon it with conviction. In the *Bhagavad Gita* emphasis is laid on sacrifice; in the Koran and in the Bible it is the same; he who does not make any sacrifice is not really a man. Think of this term sacrifice and examine it in the present state of our country. I pray to God that He will give you strength and wisdom to understand the word sacrifice and make sacrifice yourselves. I pray to God that He may give you the wisdom to think of the poor of the country in the villages far away from the cities and towns that you are building in their blood and the sacrifice of their lives, on their miseries and the miseries of their families and children. Think of God for half an hour every day, spinning the charkha and weaving your cloth. Think of all these when you are thinking of God every day for half an hour. May He give you the wisdom to know how you can save the poor of your land. This is all I have to say to you today.

The Hindu, 13-7-1927

133. SPEECH AT INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, BANGALORE

[July 12, 1927]¹

I was wondering where do I come in? There is no place here for a rustic like me who has to stand speechless in awe and wonderment. I am not in a mood to say much. All I can say is that all these huge laboratories and electrical apparatus you see here are due to the labour—unwilling and forced—of millions. For Tata's thirty lakhs did not come from outside, nor does the Mysore contribution come from anywhere else but this *begar*² world. If we were to meet the villagers and to explain to them how we are utilizing their money on buildings and plants which will never benefit them, but might perhaps benefit their posterity, they will not understand it. They will turn a cold shoulder. But

¹ From *The Hindu*, 13-7-1927

² Forced labour

we never take them into our confidence, we take it as a matter of right, and forget that the rule of "no taxation without representation" applies to them too. If you will really apply it to them, and realize your responsibility to render them an account, you will see that there is another side to all these appointments. You will then find not a little but a big corner in your hearts for them, and if you will keep it in a good, nice condition, you will utilize your knowledge for the benefit of the millions on whose labour your education depends. I shall utilize the purse you have given me for *Daridranarayana*. The real *Daridranarayana* even I have not seen, but know only through my imagination. Even the spinners who will get this money are not the real *Daridranarayana* who live in remote corners of distant villages which have yet to be explored. I was told by your professor that the properties of some of the chemicals will take years of experiments to explore. But who will try to explore these villages? Just as some of the experiments in your laboratories go on for all the twenty-four hours, let the big corner in your heart remain perpetually warm for the benefit of the poor millions.

I expect far more from you than from the ordinary man in the street. Don't be satisfied with having given the little you have done, and say, 'We have done what we could, let us now play tennis and billiards.' I tell you, in the billiard room and on the tennis-court think of the big debt that is being piled against you from day to day. But beggars cannot be choosers. I thank you for what you have given me. Think of the prayer I have made and translate it into action. Don't be afraid of wearing the cloth the poor women make for you, don't be afraid of your employers showing you the door if you wear khadi. I would like you to be men, and stand up before the world firm in your convictions. Let your zeal for the dumb millions be not stifled in the search for wealth. I tell you, you can devise a far greater wireless instrument, which does not require external research, but internal—and all research will be useless if it is not allied to internal research—which can link your hearts with those of the millions. Unless all the discoveries that you make have the welfare of the poor as the end in view, all your workshops will be really no better than Satan's workshops, as Rajagopalachari said in a joke. Well I have given you enough food for thought, if you are in a reflective mood, as all research students ought to be.

In concluding, he [said that] they must keep the lamp of their love for the motherland and her children always bright, trim, and steady. And as they

did that, so they deserved the knowledge and the advantage they were deriving from the Institute.¹

Young India, 21-7-1927

134. MESSAGE TO "THE SEARCHLIGHT"²

July 13, 1927

Those who want a message from me must not be surprised to receive the same message again and again; for, I have nothing new. Let the editor, the proprietor and the staff of *The Searchlight* as also the readers do their quota of work for the millions, that is, let them wear nothing but khadi; let them exclude all foreign cloth from their use; let them give as much as they can towards khadi work; and let them spin at least for half an hour good, even and weavable yarn and make a present of it to the All-India Spinners' Association in the name of and on behalf of *Daidranarayana*. To know whether this message has at least been read by those concerned, I suggest their sending me contribution and telling me whether they have accepted and are acting in accordance with the message. If they do not appreciate the message, let them send me a postcard stating their objections and reasons.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14182

135. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 13, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Just as I am about to go to a place, I received your letter and wire. So you are off on Saturday. I note what you say about Gangu. God be with you.

Love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5249. Courtesy: Mirabehn

¹ This paragraph is from *The Hindu*, 13-7-1927.

² For its anniversary number of July 15

136. LETTER TO J. Z. HODGE

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1927

DEAR MR. HODGE,

It was a delight to receive your letter¹ from Edinburgh and to find that my little friends had now become big friends and were getting on quite nicely.

When I receive the papers you refer to from Sir Daniel Hamilton, I will certainly study them with care and let him know my conclusions.

I am making fair progress. Please remember me to Mrs. Hodge.

Yours sincerely,

J. Z. HODGE, ESQ.
C/O NISBES
31, WARRENDER PARK TERRACE
EDINBURGH

From a photostat: S.N. 12509

137. LETTER TO SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 13, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 16th June last through Bharucha. I understand and appreciate the viewpoint elaborated in your letter, and it would give me much pleasure if I can do anything whatsoever to assist you in coming to a settlement with the Tatas.² But I know my limitations and I would like you to recognize them.

¹ Dated June 1, 1927. Introducing Sir Daniel Hamilton, the addressee had requested Gandhiji to help him in spreading the co-operative movement in India.

² The reference is to "Saklatvala's forced resignation of his post in the Tata firm in London".

All I can do is to work through Panditji which I am doing.

Yours sincerely,

SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA, ESQ., M.P.
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON S.W. 1

From a photostat: S.N. 12532

138. LETTER TO D. C. BOSE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 13, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am ashamed that your letter of 30th June last year has remained undealt with by me throughout all this time. You however had acknowledgments from time to time. I am not disposed to blame my assistants in connection with the delay. Some of it was unavoidable and some could have been avoided but for the letter having been mislaid. I however understand that my reply will not yet be too late.

I should be inclined to agree with the advice received by you from an English friend and quoted at the end of your letter. If there was really no better way, there was certainly nothing wrong in your having written to me. For, part of my public work consists in sharing, where I cannot solve, difficulties such as you have mentioned. I can appreciate all you say about the good qualities of Englishmen and even add to what you have said in your letter. But in spite of the ample food I have received during the past seven years for reflection¹, my opinion of the system not only remains unaltered [but] has received further confirmation. And the Excise Department is among the blackest spots in the system. I could not therefore be reconciled to your being in it if I can in any way help you to be out of it. Your letter attracts me to you. I would like to have you in some of the departments of national service which I am more or less controlling. And if you can get some privilege leave, I would like you to overtake me wherever I may be so that I can see you face to face and discuss all the

¹ The addressee had written: "The failure of your movement with subsequent Hindu-Muslim tension . . . has no doubt given you sufficient food for reflection."

questions you have raised in your letter. I am in Mysore up to the 15th of August and my headquarters will be Bangalore till that time. I expect to be away from time to time from Bangalore, but within the Mysore State and therefore not more than a few hours' journey from Bangalore where the keeper of the house I am staying will direct you.

Meanwhile, I can answer one of your questions straightaway. If you have the real call from within you will be not only right but it will be your duty to resist all the pressure that can be brought to bear upon you for marriage. If you can control your carnal appetites, I have no doubt that the obligations which you feel you have towards the members of your family impose the restraint upon you.

If you intend to come and see me, please bear in mind that whilst it will be possible, all other conditions being satisfied, to find enough for the support of your family, you will have to be free to be posted wherever duty calls you and even to move about from place to place, and if you do not know Hindi, you will be expected to learn it.

Yours sincerely,

D. C. BOSE, ESQ.
55, CORNWALLIS STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 12601

139. LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 13, 1927

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

Mr. Mahadeva Iyer of Shermadevi Gurukul is here. I never knew that you have anything to do with this Gurukul. But Mr. Mahadeva Iyer tells me that you are vitally interested in it. When V. V. S. Iyer was alive he wrote to me and spoke to me about the inter-dining controversy that was then going on. Mahadeva Iyer has briefly described to me the happenings after Iyer's death. Will you please let me know what connection you have with this Gurukul and what is now wanted by the party which Mahadeva Iyer describes as hostile to him or to the Gurukul?

I hope you have got over your fever.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. RAMANATHAN
ERODE

From a microfilm: S.N. 12930

140. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 13, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Here is a characteristic letter from "Comrade" Saklatvala. The facsimile of the stamped letter he sends seems to make out a very strong moral claim for him. I do not need to say anything more; for, I know that whatever language he uses you will press his claim for all its worth.

I have another letter from Jawaharlal. There is nothing new in it.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
'ANAND BHAWAN'
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 14183

141. A LETTER

Ashadh Shukla 14 [July 13, 1927]¹

Tulsidas has left nothing unsaid about the greatness of His name. The *Dwadasha mantra*,² the *Ashtakshara*,³ etc., bring peace to the victim of infatuation, and one should rely upon whatever *mantra* brings one peace. But for one who has never experienced peace and is in quest of it, Ramanama will certainly prove a *parasmani*.⁴ God has been given a thousand names which only means that he can be called by any name and that his qualities are infi-

¹ The source places this along with the other letters belonging to 1927.

² *Om namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*

³ *Om namo Narayanaya*

⁴ Philosopher's stone

nite. That is why God is also beyond nomenclature and free from attributes. But for us mortals the support of His name is absolutely essential to fall back upon and in this age even the ignorant and the illiterate can have recourse to an *Ekakshara mantra*¹ in the form of Ramanama. In fact, uttering Ramanama covers the *Ekakshara* and there is no difference between 'Om' and 'Rama'. But the value of reciting His name cannot be established by reasoning, it can only be experienced if one does it with faith.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12797

142. SPEECH AT MAHILA SAMAJ, BANGALORE²

July 13, 1927

Daḍḍranarayana is insatiable and there is room enough in his belly for all the money and the ornaments you can give. The ornaments are your *streedhan* and you have a right to dispose it of as you like. Your real ornaments are your virtues, and you will be doing real service to the poorest of the land by disposing of part of your jewellery.

Young India, 21-7-1927

143. INTERVIEW TO MR. AND MRS. BJERRUM³

[Before July 14, 1927]

Among the new missionary friends is a Danish couple Mr. and Mrs. Bjerrum . . . Gandhiji was at his wheel when the friends came.

MR. BJERRUM: This is a new wheel different from the ones we saw at the Exhibition.

GANDHIJI: Yes, it is a travelling charkha. When you fold it, it looks like a medicine chest, and a medicine chest it is for our poor people.

After giving their pleasant impressions of the Exhibition, Mr. Bjerrum began to talk of the students of his college. "The dress of most of our students is Europeanized," he informed Gandhiji not without some sorrow.

¹ *Om*

² & ³ From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

GANDHIJI: It is a great pity that Christianity should be mixed up with foreign dress and foreign ways of eating and drinking.

MRS. BJERRUM: It is indeed. But don't you think a change has already begun?

GANDHIJI: Well, a change in thought is certainly coming over, but not a corresponding change in conduct.

And with this he narrated some of his experiences with the friends of the Y.M.C.A. of Calcutta.

MR. BJERRUM: May we know what form in your opinion missionary work should take if the missionaries are to stay in India?

[GANDHIJI]: Yes. They have to alter their attitude. Today they tell people that there is no salvation for them except through the Bible and through Christianity. It is customary to decry other religions and to offer their own as the only one that can bring deliverance. That attitude should be radically changed. Let them appear before the people as they are, and try to rejoice in seeing Hindus become better Hindus and Mussalmans better Mussalmans. Let them start work at the bottom, let them enter into what is best in their life and offer nothing inconsistent with it. That will make their work far more efficacious, and what they will say and offer to the people will be appreciated without suspicion and hostility. In a word let them go to the people not as patrons, but as one of them, not to oblige them but to serve them and to work among them.

MR. BJERRUM: Thank you. We are going to Denmark next year and would like to take some message from you.

[GANDHIJI:] The external is always an expression of the internal, and if the people of Denmark would serve us, let them teach us their life-giving industry of co-operative dairy and cattle-breeding.

Young India, 14-7-1927

144. REFORM OF PINJRAPOLE

It has been my privilege during my convalescence at Bangalore to pay regular visits to the Imperial Animal Husbandry and Dairy Institute, and to take there, what may be called, regular lessons. Mr. William Smith, who is the Imperial Dairy Expert and Head of this Institute, and his assistants have most carefully shown me the working of the Institute and the different departments into which it is divided. I trust I shall make use of the knowledge thus gained in conducting the dairying experiment at the Satyagraha Ashram on behalf of the All-India Cow-protection Association. As a result of several discussions with Mr. Smith I asked him kindly to prepare for me notes on the working of pinjrapoles and on methods of cattle-improvement in our villages, which he very kindly and promptly undertook to do. I am already in possession of two valuable notes. I give below his note on pinjrapoles.

Some of the existing pinjrapoles with more or less permanent and assured incomes are fairly well managed, and do provide a comfortable refuge for a certain number of cattle which have ceased to be economically useful in their old age. In many of these institutions it is however not an uncommon thing, when trade is bad and subscriptions are slow in coming in, to find cattle being kept in these places in a state of starvation which must mean great suffering to the animals and which eventually kills them. In cases like this instead of being a refuge for the animals the goshala becomes a cow-killing institution, the method of killing being a cruel death by starvation. In at least six cases have I seen the cattle in goshalas being starved to death. The first thing then to be done with the existing pinjrapoles is to see that they do not under any circumstances whatever admit to their shelters a larger number of animals than they can feed properly, house comfortably and take care of until they die a really natural death.

All the larger pinjrapoles with an assured income, and which can command capital, should in my opinion be divided into three departments, the whole being managed by a trained dairy farm manager.

1. The refuge department where old and economically useless cattle excluding buffaloes should be comfortably fed and cared for until they die naturally.

2. A dairy department where all cows sent to the pinjrapole to escape slaughter and capable of breeding and all other cows capable of bearing calves and yielding milk should be fed, housed and milked as a

commercial dairy herd with careful milk-recording, and the milk sold to the best advantage. The very best class of stud bulls should be used in this herd and all calves carefully reared, males not good enough for issue as stud bulls to be castrated and those considered good enough for breeding either transferred to the stud department or issued to villages as breeding bulls. All female stock to be reared as milkers and breeders. When the home-bred progeny of this department gets too numerous for the pinjrapole to deal with, they could be sold to reputable Hindu owners on the distinct understanding that they are to be returned to the refuge department of the pinjrapole when too old to work or milk.

3. A stud department where the very best of the right class of breeding bulls should be kept as stud for the use of the breeders in the district. The service of these animals could be given free for all cows passed by the expert manager as suitable for breeding with the pinjrapoles stud animals and careful records of all servings kept. This department might also undertake the castration of all unsuitable animals in the district free of charge.

It is not necessary to take any specific steps to improve the quality of buffaloes. India cannot afford to keep any class of bovine which does not possess dual purpose qualities, i.e., milk in the case of the female and draught in the case of the male. Generally speaking the male buffalo is unsuitable for field or cart work, and consequently unless the males, except those required for stud purposes, are slaughtered at birth, they remain an incubus in the country. The majority of the people in India do not approve of the killing of any kind of animals, and in any case it is not an economic proposition to rear and kill these animals for beef, as the value of this class of meat in India is far below cost of production.

The buffalo exists and increases in India owing to the poor milking quality of the cows, and the aim of all cattle breeding propaganda ought to be to so increase the milk-yielding capacity of all classes of cows, that they will not only provide sufficient milk to rear a strong, healthy calf, but in addition to this give as much milk as pay the cost of their feed. If and when we attain to this standard there will be no need for the buffalo which will be automatically eliminated by economic forces. The existing conditions prevailing in many parts of India today, where a cultivator keeps two or three cows to rear bullocks from and one or two buffaloes to provide milk and ghee for his household, cannot continue. It is too costly and there is no reason whatever why the cows now kept for breeding should not in the future rear their calves and provide in addition all the milk and ghee required by the household. Our cattle have little or no beef value and we cannot afford to keep cows for draught cattle production and buffaloes for milk. The cow alone can and must do both duties. For these reasons the pinjrapole societies should confine themselves

to caring for and improving the cow. Agriculture in India depends upon the efficiency of the cow as a bullock-producer not the buffalo; and the health of the people can be maintained and improved by the milk of the cow. In a sense the buffalo is an interloper introduced because of the poor milking qualities of the cow.

If all pinjrapoles employed really qualified men capable of managing the pinjrapoles on the foregoing lines, they could undoubtedly do a great work for India.

The reader will observe from the foregoing that Mr. Smith has written with a knowledge of the existing pinjrapoles. He told me that he had visited many of them. In his opinion the pinjrapoles should serve the purpose not merely of being a home for aged and otherwise disabled cattle, but also for protecting the cow, and educating the people in the art of such protection. To that end they must have a properly equipped model dairy and a stud department. I add to these conditions a tannery department. I discussed with Mr. Smith the question of adding tanneries. The idea appeared attractive to him, but being a specialist he naturally did not want to travel beyond his province. Mr. Smith's cautious remarks about the buffalo are worthy of attention. He has not, and he cannot be expected to have, the same feeling about animal slaughter, but he recognizes that in India any proposition suggesting slaughter of useless animals would be just as much out of place as a proposition for the destruction of aged and disabled parents would be anywhere. He has, therefore, endeavoured to enter into the Hindu feeling as much as possible, and suggested means of protection and conservation of cattle consistently with Indian traditions. I hope that managers of pinjrapoles will study the suggestions made in Mr. Smith's important note and make the necessary alterations in their management, which, I am certain, can be made with very little extra cost in the beginning, and with much profit in the end. I must deal in a future issue with the other material¹ Mr. Smith has kindly placed at my disposal.

Young India, 14-7-1927

¹ *Vide* "Village Cattle Improvement", 4-8-1927.

145. AN ALL-INDIA SCRIPT

A Gujarati correspondent wrote some time ago to *Navajivan* a letter advising that I should print *Navajivan* in Devanagari script, so as to give a practical demonstration of my belief in the necessity of there being one script for all India. Although it is my firm conviction that there should be one script for all the Indian languages, and that that script can only be Devanagari, I could not follow the correspondent's advice for the reasons stated in my note¹ in *Navajivan*, and which I need not reiterate here. But there is no doubt that we ought to seize the opportunity that the great national awakening gives us, of not merely popularizing the idea but of doing something concrete in that direction. The Hindu-Muslim madness no doubt stands in the way of a thorough reform. But before the acceptance of Devanagari script becomes a universal fact in India, Hindu India has got to be converted to the idea of one script for all the languages derived from Sanskrit and the Dravidian stock. At the present moment we have Bengali script in Bengal, Gurmukhi in the Punjab, Sindhi in Sind, Oriya in Utkal, Gujarati in Gujarat, Telugu in Andhradesha, Tamil in Tamilnad, Malayalam in Kerala, Kanarese in Karnatak, not to speak of Kaithi in Bihar and Modi in the Decan. If all these scripts could be replaced by Devanagari for all practical and national purposes, it would mean a tremendous step forward. It will help to solidify Hindu India and bring the different provinces in closer touch. Anyone who has any knowledge of the different Indian languages and scripts knows to his cost what time it takes to master a new script. For the love of his country, no doubt, nothing is difficult, and time spent in mastering the different scripts, some of which are very beautiful, is in no way idly spent. But this spirit of abandon is not to be expected of millions. National leaders have to make things easy for them. Therefore, we must have an easily adaptable universal script for all India, and there is nothing so adaptable and readymade as Devanagari script. There is, or there used to be, an all-India organization for this very purpose. I do not know what its activities are at present. But if the work has to be done, either the original association should be strengthened, or a new one formed for this

¹ Vide "*Navajivan* in Devanagari Script", 26-6-1927.

purpose. The movement should in no way be confused with the spread of Hindi or Hindustani as the lingua franca. The latter work is going on very slowly, but steadily. Use of one script will facilitate the spread of one language. But the functions of the two run parallel only up to a point. Hindi or Hindustani is not designed to replace the provincial languages, but is intended to supplement them, and to be used for inter-provincial contact. And till the Hindu-Muslim tension lasts it takes the form either of Urdu written in the Persian script, and containing a preponderance of Persian or Arabic words, or Hindi written in Devanagari, and containing a preponderance of Sanskrit words. When the hearts of the two meet, the two forms of the same language will be fused together, and we shall have a resultant of the two, containing as many Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic or other words as may be necessary for its full growth and full expression.

But one script is undoubtedly designed to displace all the different scripts so as to render it easy for people belonging to different provinces to learn provincial languages. The best way of achieving the purpose is first to make the learning of Devanagari script compulsory at least for Hindus in all the schools, as it is in Gujarat, and secondly to print the important literature in different Indian languages in Devanagari script. Such effort has already been made to a certain extent. I have seen *Gitanjali* printed in Devanagari script. But the effort requires to be made on a large scale, and there should be propaganda carried on for the spread of such books. Though I know that it is out of fashion just now to suggest anything along constructive lines that may bring Hindus and Mussalmans together, I cannot help repeating what I have said in these columns and elsewhere, that Hindus must learn Urdu if they will come nearer their Mussalman brethren, and Mussalmans must learn Hindi if they will come nearer their Hindu brethren. Those who have faith in real unity between Hindus and Mussalmans need not be disconcerted by the present terrible expression of mutual hatred. Their faith, if it is of any value, must make them actively but unobtrusively perform, whenever possible, all acts of mutual toleration, affection and courtesy, and learning of one another's language is the least that one can do in that direction. Is it not better for Hindus to learn through the many ably-written Urdu books by devout Mussalmans what Mussalmans think of the Koran and the Prophet, and for Mussalmans to learn through equally well-written Hindi books by devout Hindus what Hindus think of the *Gita* and Krishna than that the respective parties should learn all the bad things that

might have been said about their respective religious books and their inspirers through their ignorant or fanatical detractors?

Young India, 14-7-1927

146. LIMITATIONS OF SATYAGRAHA

An innocent paragraph, occurring in a letter¹ in reply to one covering other subjects, has led to what I venture to call a thoughtless misrepresentation of satyagraha and its author. The paragraph is part of a private letter written in Gujarati to Mr. Bharucha. It is no thesis on satyagraha, and like every letter it contains many things understood between the writer of the original letter and that of the reply. It was not meant for publication. But when Mr. Bharucha telegraphed asking for permission to publish the paragraph, I had no hesitation in wiring permission. It appears from the newspaper report before me that the speakers at the Nagpur meeting suggested that I should have explained at the time the Nagpur Satyagraha was launched out what I have explained in my letter to Mr. Bharucha. I must dissent from the view. Had Mr. Awari not ascribed to me endorsement of his campaign, I should not even have written the article I did in repudiation. Where I cannot help, it is my rule not to hinder by any unnecessary or uncalled for interference on my part. Instead, therefore, of giving an exhaustive opinion on what I then knew of Nagpur Satyagraha, I confined myself to a repudiation and an opinion on the general atmosphere of violence prevalent in the country. And I cannot help saying that it was an unlawful use to make of my private letter for suspending Nagpur Satyagraha, if those who were permitted to see the letter did not accept the reasoning contained in it. Moreover, when they decided to make public use of the letter, they owed it to me to have made clear to them the points which they could not understand, or which appeared to them to be inconsistent with my previous writings. They owed it to the enthusiastic young men in Nagpur neither to damp their zeal nor to disconcert them by hurling in their midst an opinion which the receivers did not understand and did not accept. For myself I do not consider it to be any part of my duty to express an opinion upon the many insane things that are going on in this country, for I am humble enough to recognize that what may appear to me to be insane need not appear so to

¹ Vide "Letter to B. F. Bharucha", before 2-7-1927.

those who are doing those acts, and may even be in reality an epitome of wisdom. Though, therefore, things are being done in the name of satyagraha in several places, I have not felt called upon to say one word about them. And I do suggest to the young men in Nagpur and to all concerned that they are not in any way bound to receive the permission of the Congress to offer satyagraha or any other resistance to any unjust act so long as they do not use the Congress name. And if they are really of opinion that the Nagpur Satyagraha was justified, that it was really satyagraha, it would amount to a desertion on the part of their commander and other comrades in jail not to immediately re-embark upon their campaign, unless they think with me that what they thought was satyagraha was not so in fact.

Having cleared the ground so far, let me now try to remove the confusion that the well-meaning friends who have undertaken to criticize the letter in question have created about satyagraha. I do maintain that the Arms Act could not be broken in terms of satyagraha in the way it was in Nagpur. Let it be remembered that the bone of contention between the "Republican Army" of Nagpur and the Government was not the Arms Act but the unjust and lawless detention of many patriotic young Bengalis. It was in every way wrong, therefore, to select the Arms Act for civil disobedience. Several speakers have read into my letter a meaning which I hold it does not bear and was never intended to bear. As long ago as 1917 or 1918, I said that amongst the many black deeds of the Government, disarmament was the blackest. And out-and-out believer in non-violence though I am, I hold that it is the right of any Indian who wishes to bear arms to do so under lawful permission. I do submit that an Arms Act is now and will ever be a necessity of good government. I do not believe in the inherent right of every citizen to possess as many arms as he chooses without a licence. On the contrary, I hold it to be absolutely necessary for good government that the State should have the authority to prohibit the holding of arms except under prescribed conditions. I can also conceive the possibility of satyagraha being offered against an unjust Arms Act or its unjust administration, as I can justify satyagraha against an unjust Act for preventing thefts or other crimes. But I do maintain that just as satyagraha cannot be offered against an unjust Crimes Act by committing the specific crimes, so can satyagraha not be offered against an unjust Arms Act by carrying arms.

Let us also appreciate the distinction between satyagraha and civil disobedience. All civil disobedience is a part or branch of

satyagraha, but all satyagraha is not civil disobedience. And seeing that the Nagpur friends have suspended what they were pleased to call satyagraha or civil disobedience, let me suggest for their information and that of others how satyagraha can be legitimately offered with reference to the Bengal detenus. If they will not be angry with me or laugh at me, let me commence by saying that they can offer satyagraha by developing the power of the people through khadi, and through khadi achieving boycott of foreign cloth. They can offer satyagraha by becoming precursors of Hindu-Muslim unity, by allowing their heads to be broken whenever there is a quarrel between the two, and whilst there is no active quarrel in their parts by performing silent acts of service to those of the opposite faith to theirs. If such constructive methods are too flat for them, and if they will be satisfied by nothing less than civil disobedience in spite of the violence of thought, word and deed raging round us, I suggest the following prescription of individual civil disobedience, which even one man can offer, not indeed in the hope of securing immediate release of detenus, but certainly in the hope of the individual sacrifice ultimately eventuating in such release. Let a batch, or only one person, say from Nagpur, march on foot to the Government House in Calcutta, and if a march is irksome or impossible then let him, her, or them beg enough money for train fare from friends, and having reached Calcutta let only one satyagrahi march to the Government House and walk on to the point where he or she is stopped. There let him or her stop and demand the release of detenus or his or her own arrest. To preserve intact the civil nature of this disobedience the satyagrahi must be wholly unarmed, and in spite of insults, kicks or worse must meekly stand the ground, and be arrested without the slightest opposition. He may carry his own food in his pocket, a bottleful of water, take his *Gita*, the Koran, the Bible, the Zend Avesta or the *Granth Sahib*, as the case may be, and his *takli*. If there are many such real satyagrahis, they will certainly transform the atmosphere in an immensely short time, even as one gentle shower transforms the plains of India into a beautiful green carpet in one single day.

The question will legitimately be asked, 'If you really mean what you say, why don't you take the lead, never mind whether anyone follows you or not?' My answer is: I do not regard myself as pure enough to undertake such a heroic mission. I am trying every moment of my life to attain the requisite purity of thought, word and deed. As it is, I confess that I am swayed by many passions. Anger wells up in my breast when I see or hear about what

I consider to be misdeeds. All I can humbly claim for myself is that I can keep these passions and moods under fair subjection, and prevent them from gaining mastery over me. But the standard of purity that I want for any such heroic measure is not to have such passions at all and yet to hate the wrong. When I feel that I have become incapable even of thinking evil, and I hold it to be possible for every God-fearing man to attain that state, I shall wait for no man's advice, and even at the risk of being called the maddest of men, I shall not hesitate to knock at the Viceregal gate or go wherever God leads me, and demand what is due to this country which is being ground to dust today.

Meanwhile let no man mock at satyagraha. Let no man parody it. If it is at all possible, leave satyagraha alone, and the whole field is open for unchecked action. On a chartless sea in which there is no lighthouse a captain dares whither he wills. But a captain who knowing the existence of a lighthouse and its position, sails anyhow, or takes no precaution for knowing the lighthouse from deceiving stars, will be considered unfit for his post. If the reader can bear with me, let him understand that I claim to be the keeper of the lighthouse called satyagraha in the otherwise chartless sea of Indian politics. And, therefore, it is that I have suggested that those who make for satyagraha will do well to go to its keeper. But I know that I have no patent rights in satyagraha. I can, therefore, merely rely upon the indulgence of fellow-workers for recognition of my office.

Young India, 14-7-1927

147. THE GOOSE AND THE GANDER

TO THE EDITOR, "YOUNG INDIA"

DEAR SIR,

You affirm that swaraj is impossible without the removal of untouchability, even as it is impossible without Hindu-Muslim unity. I would link up the two impossibilities and say that Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible without the removal of untouchability—in other words, that Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible without Hindu unity. I hope you grant this proposition. Andrews is one of those who seem to have realized the truth of it.

But be that as it may, allow me to point out one little difficulty in your otherwise most helpful article entitled "Our Shame" in which

you so generously notice my letter to you printed in the same issue (June 30th). If, because Hindu-Muslim unity is necessary for swaraj, special political provision is to be made for the Mussalmans, as was done by you in your scheme¹ published in *Young India* for 19-2-1925 or as is done in the latest communal Pact, viz., that of the A.I.C.C. which, be it noted, purports to be a general communal settlement, and not merely a Hindu-Muslim arrangement as you think—then why leave the suppressed class in the cold, when you grant that its unity with the rest of the nation is as necessary for swaraj as Hindu-Muslim unity? We leave the woes of our child-widows out of these schemes and pacts, because (1) these widows are not a community, (2) there is legislation to help them, and (3) most of us (rightly or wrongly) do not look upon the amelioration of their condition as the *sine qua non* of swaraj. If legal enactments are useless for Touchable-Untouchable unity, they must be equally so for Hindu-Muslim unity. But what do we find in actual practice? In the name of swaraj and Hindu-Muslim unity, the needs (real or supposed) of the most clamant but not the most needy community alone are attended to in our Acts, Pacts and Schemes. And that is excused on the plea that special provision for any community is a necessary evil.

Well, I say, if special provision is a necessary evil, tolerate it where it is most necessary, i.e., in the case of the suppressed class, who, as you have already recognized, have a much stronger case for special treatment than the Mussalmans, —and not merely where it is most vociferously demanded, as in the case of our Islamic countrymen. If communal representation is to be allowed in some form or other, in spite of its known evils, then allow it in all cases impartially, even at the risk of a *reductio ad absurdum*. Else mention no community at all in your scheme, but let equal opportunities for all *citizens* (and not communities), alike in the matter of education, the public services, and representation on elective bodies, be the guiding inviolable principle of your constitution.

I hope you will advise our Congress Executive to guide themselves along either of these two ways, the only logical ways as they appear to a humble student of and worker for his nation. For ourselves there is no question which of the two we would prefer. Have you not, at my instance, committed yourself to the latter, which I may call the Rational Nationalist way, in *Young India* for 20-8-1925, p. 292?² You have, and therefore I pray that you advise the Congress Committee who are charged with the drafting of a constitution for the future government of this country, and who have made a public appeal for suggestions towards it, not to go in for any unhealthy compromise between the oil and water of

¹ *Vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 160-3.

² *Vide* Vol. XXVIII, pp. 93-4.